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TELEVISION'S EFFECTS

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PROCEEDINGS OF THE THIRTY-FIFTH ANNUAL CONFERENCE OF THE AMERICAN ASSOCIATION FOR PUBLIC OPINION RESEARCH

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FALL 1980

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The Fruits of Cultivation Analysis: A Reexamination of Some Effects of Television Watching

MICHAEL HUGHES

In a series of articles and reports published in the *Journal of Communication* and in reports issued by The Annenberg School of Communications Gerbner and others claim that heavy television watching cultivates conceptions of reality in viewers which are consistent with the world presented in television dramas (Gerbner and Gross, 1976; Gerbner et al., 1977a: 1977b; 1978a; 1978b). After carefully documenting the fact that much of the content of television programs involves violence, Gerbner and his associates argue that persons who spend many hours each day watching television are exposed to such a heavy barrage of violence and crime-related imagery that they come to view the world as more violent and more dominated by criminal concerns than it really is. As a result, such persons will tend to have inaccurate perceptions about the amount and kinds of crimes committed in the real world, to inaccurately

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Abstract A set of items from the General Social Survey for 1975 and 1977 measuring alienation and fear of walking near one's home at night, which were claimed by Gerbner et al. (1978a) to be related to heavy television watching, are reanalyzed with simultaneous controls for age, sex, race, income, education, hours worked per week outside the home, church attendance, membership in voluntary associations, and population size. The effects of television watching on responses to these items which were claimed by Gerbner et al. are largely absent in this analysis. Items in the same data set used by Gerbner et al., but not included in their analysis are analyzed using the technique above, with results that fail to support the contention of Gerbner and his associates. The implications of these findings for a cultivation theory of television effects are discussed.

Michael Hughes is Assistant Professor of Sociology, Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University. The author wishes to thank Richard A. Peterson, Walter R. Gove, Cathleen Burnett, Ricky McCarty, Michael R. Wood, Jerome B. Price, and two anonymous reviewers for their comments on an earlier draft. Also helpful were conversations with Anthony Oberschall, G. Russell Carpenter, John Ryan, Lynn Ballew, and Christian D. Hughes, and research assistance provided by Eileen Covey and Timothy J. Carter.

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estimate the number of persons engaged in law enforcement, to trust others less, to become alienated, and to experience an unwarranted amount of generalized fear, reflected in taking excessive precautions against violence and in being afraid to walk alone at night in their own neighborhoods. Furthermore, in their 1978a and 1978b analyses Gerbner et al. suggest that since television violence is so frequent and is performed by many characters in a general context of moral approval, violence will be seen as appropriate behavior in some conventional situations.

Rather than asserting that television watching has direct effects, Gerbner and Gross (1976) and Gerbner et al. (1977a; 1977b; 1978a; 1978b) argue that it "cultivates" a symbolic structure, which is then used by viewers to interpret everyday reality. To investigate this phenomenon, they employ "cultivation analysis," which they claim is superior to other forms of analysis (particularly experimental designs) since it is the relatively long-term effects on cognitive structure, through which individuals perceive and interpret experience, which are at issue, not just the creation of some transient opinion, feeling, or attitude (Gerbner and Gross, 1976:175; Gerbner et al., 1978a: 193–94; 1978b:48–49). Cultivation analysis is not really a special technique, but rather a simple research strategy which flows directly from a theory that assumes that heavy exposure to cultural imagery shapes conceptions of reality. In their application of cultivation analysis, Gerbner and his associates first determine the "television answer" (i.e., the answer "slanted in the direction of the world of television" [Gerbner and Gross, 1976:191; also see Gerbner et al., 1978a:195; 1978b:50–51]) to a question posed by an interviewer as part of a survey. If subsequent analyses show that television watching is positively related to giving the "television answer," then evidence of cultivation is found. In the analyses of misperception of crime and law enforcement activities, Gerbner et al. (1977a; 1977b) treat television watching as a continuous variable and use partial correlation techniques (controlling a limited number of extraneous variables) to assess cultivation effects, while in the analysis of so-called behavioral effects (i.e., alienation, fear of walking alone at night, and approval of violence) Gerbner et al. (1977a; 1977b; 1978a; 1978b) compare heavy watchers with light watchers, controlling confounding variables one at a time.

In none of the analyses of correlates of television watching in the studies cited above do Gerbner and his associates present analyses which both (1) provide controls for the available variables which might reasonably be expected to produce spurious relationships between television watching and the dependent variables, and (2) control for such extraneous variables simultaneously.

The purpose of the present study is twofold: first, to reanalyze the same data used by Gerbner et al. (1978a) from the General Social Surveys (GSS) for 1975 and 1977 (Davis, 1978a), and to include the analysis of relevant items ignored by Gerbner and his associates, with simultaneous controls for extraneous variables, in order to reassess the assertions of Gerbner and his associates about some of the correlates of television watching; and second, to evaluate their theoretical position concerning cultivation effects in the light of analyses mentioned above, and to offer a critique of their determination of "television answers."

The Gerbner et al. (1978a) Analysis

The 1977 GSS asked the question: "Is there any area right around here—that is, within a mile—where you would be afraid to walk alone at night?" The alternatives were "yes" and "no." Gerbner et al. (1978a) find that heavy watchers are more likely than light watchers to say yes. The 1977 GSS also asked three questions tapping frequently measured dimensions of anomie or alienation: (1) "In spite of what some people say, the lot of the average man is getting worse, not better" (agree or disagree); (2) "It's hardly fair to bring a child into the world with the way things look for the future" (agree or disagree); and (3) "Most public officials are not really interested in the problems of the average man" (agree or disagree). The sole question from the 1975 GSS which is analyzed in detail in the Gerbner et al. (1978a) analysis is the question, "Do you think it will be best for the future of this country if we take an active part in world affairs, or if we stay out of world affairs?" (take active part or stay out). Heavy watchers of television are more likely than light watchers to agree with the alienation items and to report a preference for staying out of world affairs. All these findings were interpreted as being in the direction of the "television answer."

These findings hold up after controls are introduced for age, sex, and education.

There are two problems with the way this is done. First, age, sex, and education are controlled one variable at a time, not simultaneously—a technique which results in the presentation of three underspecified three-variable models (i.e., one dependent variable, one independent variable, and one control variable). Second, it does not seem reasonable that these three variables exhaust the possibilities of variables available in the GSS which may be responsible for spurious relationships between television watching and the dependent variables in the Gerbner et al. analysis. Other studies of television watching have shown that race is related to television watching (i.e., blacks watch more [Bogart, 1972a; 1972b:377]). It is also true that race is related to such things as alienation, and it is possible that it is related to fear of walking alone at night in one's neighborhood. The same is true for income, which can provide opportunities for cultural exposure both in and away from the home, and constrain the amount of time available to watch television. Obviously the number of hours worked outside the home severely limits the opportunities to watch television and is also probably related to alienation and to a lack of fear of walking alone at night in one's neighborhood (this is, of course, what cognitive dissonance theory would predict). For similar reasons it may also be that television watching and the dependent variables considered are related to church attendance, number of voluntary associations one belongs to, and the population size of the place where one lives.

It should be noted that even after controlling for all the relevant social and demographic variables, the finding of a statistically significant relationship between television watching and fear of victimization and alienation would not necessarily indicate that fear and alienation were produced by exposure to television. It is just as plausible that persons who are fearful and alienated are more likely to stay at home and watch television (this may be particularly apt to occur in high crime areas; see Doob and MacDonald [1979:172–74] and the comment by Gerbner et al. [1979]). However, such statistically significant relationships in cross sectional data would at least be consistent with the cultivation perspective.

The Reanalysis

CONTROL VARIABLES

As reported in Gerbner et al. (1978a), in 1975 and 1977, the National Opinion Research Center General Social Survey (Davis, 1978b) included the question: "On the average day, about how many hours do you personally watch television?" Answers were coded into actual hours watched from zero to 24. This question was also asked in the 1978 GSS. In any analysis of the relationship between television watching and some dependent variable, if a potential control variable can be shown to be related to television watching and potentially related to the dependent variable in a causal way, then it should be included as a control. Accordingly, an analysis was done to determine the importance of the variables identified above as control variables. Though the focus of the analysis and discussion to follow is limited to the 1975 and 1977 GSS, the analysis of determinants of television watching includes data from the 1978 GSS. Data from all three samples were combined and run as a single data set.[1] Such a procedure allows for a more definitive statement concerning effects of these variables on television watching, since increasing sample size reduces the impact of measurement error and sampling fluctuations. Running the data year-by-year produces the same substantive results, although the pattern of strength of the independent variables changes. The results of this complete three-year analysis are shown in Table 1.

Table 1 gives the mean number of hours of television watched per day by age, sex, race, income, education, hours worked (per week), church attendance, number of voluntary associations, and size of place. For each variable there are two columns of means. The first column presents the zero-order relationship between the variable and hours of television watched. The second column presents the means for each category of the variable after adjusting them for the effects of all the other variables in the table. The statistics *eta* and *beta* measure strength of association. Multiple Classification Analysis (Andrews et al., 1969) was used to simultaneously adjust the effects of each variable for all the other variables in the table.[2]

The relationship between sex and television watching is fairly strong before controls, but disappears afterwards, and this disappearance is accounted for by the variable of hours worked per week (Hughes and Peterson, 1980). Sex remains strong until this variable is introduced, suggesting that women watch TV more than men because they are likely to work fewer hours outside the home than men. Race is still a fairly strong predictor of television watching even after controls are added for employment, socioeconomic status, and other variables. Consistent with the findings of other investigators (Bogart, 1972a; 1972b; see review in Comstock et al., 125–28), black people watch an average of approximately three-quarters of an hour more television per day than white people. Education is related to television watching in a generally negative direction, but its predictive power is reduced by controls. Age is related to television watching before controls in a curvilinear fashion, as has been reported in some other studies but not all (Bower, 1973:43; Comstock et al., 1978:92). However, after controls, age has almost a monotonic negative re-

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[1] Sample procedures and characteristics are detailed in Davis (1978b).

[2] Since MCA allows for the possibility that the relationships are not monotonic, the lack of sign (+ or −) on the *etas* and *betas* does not indicate a positive relationship.

Table 1. Mean Hours of Television Watching Per Day by Categories of Control Variables, Unadjusted and Adjusted (N = 4,149)

	Unadjusted Mean	*Adjusted Mean*	*(N)*
Sex			
Male	2.67	2.91	(1,855)
Female	3.16	2.91	(2,294)
eta	.101*		
Beta		.000	
Race			
White	2.81	2.83	(3,712)
Black	3.73	3.59	(437)
eta	.130*		
Beta		.108*	
Education			
0–7	3.23	2.82	(326)
8	3.09	2.96	(332)
9–11	3.61	3.36	(756
12	2.99	3.06	(1,435)
13–15	2.53	2.58	(701)
16	2.14	2.44	(354)
17+	1.80	2.31	(245)
eta	.233*		
Beta		.150*	
Age			
18–24	3.38	3.28	(665)
25–34	2.81	2.99	(895)
35–44	2.61	2.87	(745)
45–54	2.57	2.75	(635)
55–64	2.86	2.84	(582)
65+	3.31	2.68	(627)
eta	.144*		
Beta		.088*	
Hours work per week			
0–9	3.61	3.54	(1,764)
10–29	2.71	2.68	(289)
30–39	2.47	2.48	(337)
40–49	2.41	2.43	(1,328)
50+	2.07	2.28	(431)
eta	.285*		
Beta		.256*	
Income			
0–3,999	3.74	3.20	(531)
4–6,999	3.26	2.91	(563)
7–9,999	3.16	3.04	(529)
10–14,999	2.86	2.92	(879)
15–24,999	2.60	2.84	(1,090)
25,000+	2.20	2.64	(539)
eta	.212*		
Beta		.071*	

Table 1. *(Continued)*

	Unadjusted Mean	*Adjusted Mean*	*(N)*
Number of memberships			
0	3.46	3.13	(1,122)
1	2.96	2.86	(1,152)
2	2.81	2.87	(722)
3	2.46	2.72	(504)
4+	2.33	2.81	(649)
eta	.187*		
beta		.066*	
Church attendance			
LT 1 a Year	3.13	3.10	(943)
A Few a Year	3.08	3.07	(1,083)
1–3 a Month	2.96	2.86	(682)
About 1 a Month	2.71	2.78	(1,121)
5+ Per Month	2.28	2.33	(320)
eta	.114*		
beta		.100*	
Size of place			
0–9,999	2.91	2.89	(1,667)
10–69,999	2.82	2.94	(1,269)
70–199,999	2.99	3.03	(437)
200–599,999	2.96	2.91	(361)
600,000+	3.06	2.79	(415)
eta	.035		
beta		.027	

Source: NORC General Social Survey: 1975, 1977, and 1978 combined.
Significance Level: * $p < .05$.

lationship with television watching, suggesting that older persons watch more television than others for reasons associated with socioeconomic, social, and employment variables. Population size shows no relationship either before or after controls.

Opportunity (or time available) seems to have a strong impact on time spent in television watching. Hours worked per week is the strongest predictor of television watching both before and after controls. Number of memberships in voluntary associations is negatively related to television watching before controls, but its strength is cut dramatically with controls. However, the negative effect of church attendance, which is moderately strong as a predictor at the zero-order level, is reduced hardly at all with controls.

From this analysis, it appears that the exclusion of race, hours worked, and church attendance from the analysis by Gerbner et al. (1978a) may be a serious lapse, particularly since these variables may well be related to the dependent variables they use. It is also apparent that two weaker predictors of television watching, which Gerbner et al. did not include in their analysis, may also be confounding the relationship between television watching and dependent variables—income and number of voluntary associations.

REANALYSIS WITH SIMULTANEOUS CONTROLS FOR CONFOUNDING VARIABLES

Table 2 presents the results of an analysis of the relationship between television watching and the five variables analyzed by Gerbner et al. (1978a) from the 1975 and 1977 GSS. Television watching is coded in the same way as it was in the Gerbner et al. (1978a) analysis.

Table 2. Mean Scores on Items Analyzed in Gerbner et al. (1978a) by Hours of Television Watched (per day) Unadjusted, and Adjusted for Sex, Race, Education, Income, Age, Hours Worked (per week), Number of Memberships, Church Attendance, and Population Size

	Hours Watched Per Day				
	0–2	*3*	*4+*	*eta-beta*	*N*
(1) World affairs					
Unadj.	.311	.342	.466	.144*	(1,333)
Adj.	.342	.354	.413	.066*	
(2) Public officials					
Unadj.	.579	.693	.723	.139*	(1,313)
Adj.	.613	.686	.667	.066*	
(3) Lot of the average man					
Unadj.	.496	.625	.618	.125*	(1,312)
Adj.	.534	.619	.555	.066*	
(4) Child into the world					
Unadj.	.338	.404	.466	.113*	(1,325)
Adj.	.386	.378	.400	.015	
(5) Afraid to walk alone					
Unadj.	419	421	.475	.051	(1,362)
Adj.	.451	.419	.418	.032	

QUESTION WORDING AND CODES

(1) Do you think it will be best for the future of this country if we take an active part in world affairs, or if we stay out of world affairs: 1 = stay out, 0 = active part.

(2) Most public officials are not really interested in the problems of the average man. 1 = agree; 0 = disagree.

(3) In spite of what some people say, the lot of the average man is getting worse, not better. 1 = agree; 0 = disagree.

(4) It's hardly fair to bring a child into the world with the way things look for the future. 1 = agree; 0 = disagree.

(5) Is there any area right around here—that is, within a mile—where you would be afraid to walk alone at night? 1 = yes; 0 = no.

Significance level: * $p < .05$.

For each variable, the unadjusted row gives the proportion (this is the mean for the variable after coding it 0 and 1) responding in the direction reported by Gerbner et al. (1978a) for each level of television watching (0, 1, 2 hours is "light;" 3 hours is "medium;" and 4 or more hours is "heavy"); the second row displays the same proportion (mean) after adjusting the relationship for the effects of sex, race, education, age, hours worked (per week), income, number of memberships, church attendance, and population size. As in Table 1, the *eta* and *beta* are measures of association. The sample size is in parentheses.[3]

Only one of the five relationships claimed by Gerbner et al. (1979a) holds up after controls. Three of the five show significant differences, but two of these three do not conform to the patterns which one would expect, given the assumptions of the cultivation perspective.

Fear of walking alone at night, the variable which bears most directly on the Gerbner et al. (1978a) hypothesis concerning television watching and the perception of environmental menace, reverses direction after controls, and while this relationship is not statistically significant, it suggests that those who watch television heavily are *less* likely to be afraid of walking alone at night in their neighborhoods. An inspection of the effects of control variables reveals that sex (*beta* = .386), age (*beta* = .101), and size of place (*beta* = .255) are extremely powerful predictors of fear of walking alone at night, and that television watching (*beta* = .033) is very weak by comparison. Doob and McDonald (1979:175), in a similar analysis, found that the relationship of television viewing to an environmental fear index of nine items (including one item virtually identical to the question from the GSS analyzed by Gerbner et al.) disappeared after controls were introduced for sex, age, crime rate, urban residence, radio news, newspaper reading, and the crime by urban interaction, and that sex, age, and crime rate were, with controls, very powerful predictors of environmental fear.

Analysis of the anomia items, which are somewhat more peripherally related to the claims of the cultivation perspective, does not yield findings entirely consistent with that perspective. The relationship of television watching with the item concerning the fairness of bringing a child into the world is not significant after controls. There is a .014 (i.e., 1.4 percent) difference between heavy and light watching. The question about the lot of the average man getting better or worse shows an apparently curvilinear relationship with television watching, with more similarity between heavy and light viewers than between either of these categories and moderate viewers. There is a .021 (2.1 percent) difference between heavy and light viewing. The relationship is significant not because of this difference, but because those in the medium category have a higher mean than those in the heavy and light categories. Only the anomia item concerning public officials' interest in the average man shows a relationship with television watching which is close to what Gerbner and his associates would predict, but even in this case, it is the moderate watchers who are the most "alienated," while cultivation theory would predict a monotonic relationship. There is a .054 (5.4 percent) gap between heavy and light watching, but a .073 (7.3 percent) gap between medium and light watching. The finding that a medium level of television watching is more "alienating" than either heavy or light viewing on two of these anomia items directly contradicts the cultivation prespective, which assumes that it is the heavy barrage of violent imagery on television (to which heavy viewers are more exposed than light viewers) which should make a difference. Of course, since these items both measure "alienation" and are thus correlated with one another, similar findings on both measures should not necessarily be interpreted as two independent disconfirmations.

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[3] The present analysis reports on roughly 150 fewer respondents (depending on year and variable) than in the Gerbner et al. (1978a) analysis. This attrition is because some cases have data missing on the control variables. The variable which is responsible for the loss of the most cases is income.

The relationship between television watching and the item concerning U.S. participation in international affairs holds up precisely as claimed in the Gerbner et al. (1978a) analysis; however, the predictive power of television watching is reduced with controls. The substantive significance of this is discussed below.

ADDITIONAL ANALYSES OF ITEMS IGNORED BY GERBNER ET AL. (1978a)

The statistical analysis above suggests strongly that when one controls for relevant social and socioeconomic variables, the claims made by Gerbner and his associates (1978a) do not hold up. However, not controlling for relevant variables is not the only lapse in the analysis. Gerbner and his colleagues also failed to report relationships in the 1975 GSS and 1977 GSS (to which, I assume, they had access) of television watching to dependent variables directly related to violence, and to variables very similar to items they report on from other surveys. A look at the relationships of television watching to these variables, even at the zero-order level, suggests a very different conclusion regarding what television "cultivates" from that offered by Gerbner et al. (1978a). Indeed, these "behavioral" correlates of television watching appear to be incongruent with the violent imagery on television which Gerbner et al. (1977a; 1977b; 1978a; 1978b) have ably documented.

In the 1975 GSS two questions were asked concerning the appropriateness of violence, while two other questions from the 1977 GSS concern the ownership of firearms. The questions on violence are, "Are there any situations you can imagine in which you would approve of a man striking an adult male stranger?" (yes or no); and, "Are there any situations you can imagine in which you would approve of a policeman striking an adult male citizen?" (yes or no). The first question is similar to a question asked of children and reported on in Gerbner et al. as indicating that children who watch a great deal of television are likely to approve violence. This question was: "It's almost always right to hit someone if you are mad at them" (agree or disagree). Admittedly, there are differences in wording, but the similarities are quite striking.

A question in the 1977 GSS asked, "Do you happen to have in your home any guns or revolvers?" (yes or no); if the answer was yes, they were asked (among other questions): "Is it a pistol?" (yes or no). In their paper Gerbner et al. (1978a) report on a question from the 1976 American National Election Study by the Center for Political Studies concerning precautions persons have taken in order to be safe from crime. Persons reported whether or not they "kept a gun for purposes of protection." Such behavior was found by Gerbner et al. (1978a) to be related to television watching. Again, admittedly the GSS questions are not exactly the same as that reported on by Gerbner et al. (1978a), but the similarities do appear to make these items relevant.

The relationship between television watching and these four items is presented in Table 3. At the zero-order level, those who watch television more are *less* likely to approve violence whether by a private citizen or by a policeman. The relationship for police violence is still significant with controls, although the relationship for private citizen violence becomes insignificant (stays in the same direction) after controls.

An analysis in Hughes and Peterson (1980) shows that race is an important control variable here. Black persons are both more likely to watch television, as reported above, and more likely not to approve violence (this is to be expected, as it is easily shown that in the United States black people are more likely to be victims of violence [Ennis, 1967:30; see also Nettler, 1978:87–96 for a review of victimization studies]). Controlling for race, therefore, reduces the original relationship between television watching and the disapproval

Table 3. Mean Scores on Items in the NORC GSS Not Analyzed by Gerbner et al. (1978a) by Hours of Television Watched (per day) Unadjusted, and Adjusted for Sex, Race, Education, Income, Age, Hours Worked (per week), Number of Memberships, Church Attendance, and Population Size

	Hours Watched Per Day				
	0–2	*3*	*4+*	*eta-beta*	*N*
(1) Man punch					
Unadj.	.721	.743	.649	.083*	(1,377)
Adj.	.714	.733	.665	.058	
(2) Police strike					
Unadj.	.783	.757	.661	.123*	(1,374)
Adj.	.765	.743	.697	.067*	
(3) Have guns or revolvers					
Unadj.	.519	.551	.503	.034	(1,354)
Adj.	.520	.534	.521	.011	
(4) Is it a pistol					
Unadj.	.220	.219	.220	.039	(1,351)
Adj.	.217	.209	.232	.038	

QUESTION WORDING AND CODES

(1) Are there any situations that you can imagine in which you would approve of a man punching an adult male stranger? 1 = yes; 0 = no.

(2) Are there any situations you can imagine in which you would approve of a policeman striking an adult male citizen? 1 = yes; 0 = no.

(3) Do you happen to have in your home any guns or revolvers? 1 = yes; 0 = no.

(4) (If respondent answered yes to the above) Is it a pistol? 1 = yes; 0 = no (+ those who have no guns or revolvers).

Significance level: * $p < .05$.

of violence. Analysis of these items in the 1978 GSS produces nearly the same results (Hughes and Peterson, 1980). Analysis of the other two variables concerning ownership of guns (in general) and pistols shows that there is no relationship with television watching either before or after controls.

Unfortunately, the question constituting both the dependent and independent variables in the Gerbner et al. (1978a) analysis concerning firearms differs from the questions in the GSS. This raises difficult problems of interpretation. Nonetheless, the data from the GSS do show that heavy television watching does not seem to "cultivate" a general tendency to possess firearms.

The "Television Answer" and Cultivation Theory

Gerbner et al. (1977a; 1977b; 1978a; 1978b) argue that the content of television programs is so violent that persons who watch frequently have a picture of the real world which is distorted in the direction of the violent world of television. Such persons reveal this distorted understanding of the world by giving answers which are slanted in the direction of the television world in response to survey questions. Since television presents a wide variety of overt and covert messages, some violent, some not, it is not entirely obvious what the "television answer" to a particular survey question should be. In some of their analyses, Gerbner et al. (1977a; 1977b) overcome this ambiguity by setting up items which have clearly defined "television world" and "real world" alternatives. The former are indicated by their own documentation (Gerbner and Gross, 1976; Gerbner et al., 1977a; 1977b) of the content of television, and the latter are documented by the census, or with FBI crime data. In the case of these items a "television answer" can be objectively determined.[4] By making a few assumptions, the same is true for the items concerning fear of victimization, taking precautions against crime, and the approval of violence. However, the case is not nearly so clear for the items concerning anomia and U.S. involvement in world affairs.

Gerbner and Gross (1976) in laying the groundwork for their argument, make a key assumption about the basic function of television:

> We begin with the assertion that television is the central cultural arm of American society. It is an agency of the established order and as such serves primarily to extend and maintain rather than to alter, threaten, or weaken conventional conceptions, beliefs, and behaviors. Its chief cultural function is to spread and stabilize social patterns, to cultivate not change but resistance to change. Television is a medium of the socialization of most people into standardized roles and behaviors. Its function is, in a word, enculturation. (Gerbner and Gross, 1976:175).

After making a similar statement, Gross and Jeffries-Fox (1978:242) add the following: "Because media messages are commodities manufactured for sale, their perspective reflects institutional organization and control. The goal of greatest audience appeal at least cost demands that these messages follow conventional social morality." It would appear that if these statements accurately represent the function of television in American society, then (before looking at the results of a survey including such questions) one might reasonably predict that those who watch a great deal of television would have attitudes which reflect the interests of the established order, particularly as they have existed in the United States during the time that television has been a common element in American society. Consistent with this theory is the prediction that heavy watchers of television would be more likely to believe that the United States should take an active part in world affairs. Clearly it would serve the dominant political and economic interests in the United States, and the interests of multinational corporations, if the American people had attitudes which are consistent with U.S. involvement in a variety of international situations. Therefore, in regard to this item, given the logic of their analysis of the function of television, it is easily argued that Gerbner et al. (1978a) have chosen the wrong alternative as the "television answer" to this question. A very similar argument can be made for the items measuring the beliefs that public officials are interested in the problems of the average man, that the lot of the average man is getting better, and that it is fair to bring children into the world.

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[4] The analysis of these items included simultaneous controls, but may be criticized for having an inadequate list of control variables. (See Gerbner et al., 1977b:Table 69).

If we make our judgments according to this argument, then the analyses in the present paper uniformly fail to support cultivation theory. In the absence of better data (and a better measure of television exposure which should at the very least not collapse television watching into the three gross categories necessary for cultivation "analysis"), it is difficult to know precisely what these findings imply.

For example, it could be that the particular theory of cultivation offered by Gerbner and his associates is incorrect and that television actually cultivates many realistic and functional conceptions of the world (since persons who watch more than minimal amounts do not appear to be very convinced that (1) public officials really care about the average citizen, (2) the lot of the average is getting better, and (3) that the United States should persist in foreign involvements), and that it has the effect (when we compare light and heavy watchers) of producing negative attitudes about violence in spite of the fact that, as Gerbner and his associates have shown, television produces a very heavy barrage of violent imagery. Clearly, such a conclusion is not warranted by the present analysis, but it should not be dismissed.

Alternatively, it could be that cultivation theory is correct, but that the analytical procedures used by Gerbner and his associates are incapable of uncovering such an effect because total exposure to television does not specifically tap what people who watch are exposed to. While it may be very useful to know what total television watching is related to, some of the more subtle effects might be more apparent only if we knew precisely what people watched and were able to control for predetermined personality and other characteristics which are related to the selection of certain kinds of programs.

Finally, cultivation theory may be a gross oversimplification of how television affects behavior through culture. That is, television in

American society may be related to the diffusion of culture and to alterations in social structure, both of which affect the behavior of virtually all persons in the society regardless of how much television they watch. For example, persons who watch television may be carriers of cultural innovations, ways of conceptualizing the world, and variations in lifestyle which, through social interaction in the real world, are diffused to persons who had little, if any contact with the original messages. Furthermore, television structures the markets for consumer goods of all kinds, and therefore is in large part responsible for the way consumers are tied into the economy and the way producers develop products and organize marketing activities. If, for example, television affects the way leisure time is used, then it will affect the kinds of products that will be produced, the way they are sold, and, in part, how they are used. Such a chain of events affects a broad category of persons regardless of their viewing habits or the content of the programs they watch. Similarly, television has changed the structure of political campaigns, and modified the way persons view the political system and their personal relationship to it. In short, if the effects of television on American society are as pervasive as these limited examples suggest, then trying to uncover the effect of television by comparing heavy and light watchers is bound to result in inconsistent and largely uninterpretable findings.

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Reactions to Sex on Television: An Exploratory Study

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IN RECENT YEARS, one of the most harshly criticized aspects of television programing has been the treatment of sexual content. Public opinion polls reveal that slightly more than 50 percent of those surveyed report some degree of dissatisfaction (Bower, 1973; Callum, 1979; Roper, 1974; Ryan, 1976; Waters, 1978). This sentiment has been expressed more actively by certain segments of the population. In one year alone, the Federal Communications Commission noted a

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Abstract A sample of 660 adults watched one of 15 randomly selected half-hour or hour programs which were representative of prime-time major network offerings in the fall 1977 season and which had been objectively analyzed for the presence of physically intimate and sexual content. The adults were asked to rate the amount of sexual content in the program and the suitability of that content for adult, teenage, and child audiences and to estimate how often specific physically intimate behaviors were present in the show. Each adult provided demographic data, completed an attitude survey on TV sex, and evaluated how suitably 13 sexual topics have been portrayed on TV. Through correlational analyses, the study provides information about what kinds of people are responding in which ways to specific kinds of physically intimate portrayals on television.

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threefold increase in the number of complaints about "obscenity, profanity and indecency on the airwaves" (Waters, 1978). Even more extreme steps have been taken by one group, which published a list of 1977–78 prime-time programs ranked by amount of sexual content and identified with their advertising sponsors, asking the public to use this information to modify their consumer practices (National Federation for Decency, 1977).

Formal content analyses of the past several seasons (Abel and Fontes, 1976; Fernandez-Collado and Greenberg, 1978; Franzblau et al., 1977; Silverman et al., 1979) have documented an increase in the frequency of certain kinds of sexual portrayals, specifically flirtatious behavior, suggestive comments, and contextually implied intercourse. On the other hand, what has remained consistent over the sampled years is that explicit behaviors (such as intercourse) are never actually seen on the screen but are only referred to verbally or contextually implied, and that a large portion of the references to sexuality occur in a humorous format.

The impact of televised portrayals of sex on children and youth may be at issue for many people who are currently raising objections. Roberts et al. (1978) reported that in a sample of parents of 3- to 11-year-old children, television was ranked second only to parents themselves as the primary source for their children's sexual learning. However, only 13 percent of the parents thought that their children received accurate information from the medium. Evidence from a survey conducted by the Independent Broadcasting Authority in England (reported by Eysenck and Nias, 1978) suggests that sexual more often than violent content was the reason why parents stopped their children from watching a program on television.

Concerns about TV sex are clearly related to individual differences which determine sensitivity to the issue. For example, in a California survey for the Corporation for Public Broadcasting, place of residence was found to be an important variable. Of those people questioned in the San Jose area (Katzman and Laselle, 1974), 16 percent considered the "amount of sex, suggestiveness, and bad language on television a serious problem," while nearly double that percentage (30 percent) of the Sacramento sample agreed with the statement (Katzman, 1974). Moreover, such variables as gender, religion, age, and education have been identified as important determinants (*Time*, 1977) of more general attitudes about sexual mores and would be expected to relate to individuals' opinions about televised portrayals of sexuality as well.

In addition to these individual correlates, sensitivity to TV sex may relate to aspects of the television medium itself: the extreme heterogeneity of the television audience (particularly with respect to age), the lack of a clearly defined and uniformly applied rating system (like the X-R-PG-G ratings of the movie industry), or the presence of the television within the very homes of its audience. On the other hand, the heart of such criticism may rest in the opinion by a majority of the viewing public that certain sexual topics are unsuitable for broadcasting on television or that TV presents a singularly humorous and/or exploitive treatment of human sexuality. While such speculations abound, to date there has been no systematic inquiry of the viewing public to determine which people are objecting to which specific kinds of televised sexual content.

The present survey took an initial, exploratory step in this direction. Several hundred adult members of community groups were shown a sample of television programs and made periodic ratings on the amount of sexual content in the programs and the suitability of that content for audiences of different ages. Demographic and general attitudinal information was collected from each participant and related to their attitudes about the televised sexual content. Since the sample of programs used in this study had been objectively analyzed for sexual content using a formal coding scheme (see Silverman et al., 1978), it was possible to examine the relationship between subjective and objective ratings of sexual content.

Method

SUBJECTS AND PERSONNEL

A total of 660 adults belonging to 26 different community groups, including parent-teacher, religious, charitable and social organizations, participated in the study. About 60 percent of these groups were recruited by a telephoned invitation and the remaining 40 percent responded to an advertisement placed in newspapers in several Long Island communities about 60 miles east of New York City. In all cases, $2 per participant was donated to the group's treasury. The sample characteristics were as follows: 79 percent were female and 21 percent male; 97 percent were white; the age range was 15–82 years, with a mean of 41 years; the highest education achieved was high school for 24 percent, some college for 29 percent, a college degree for 23 percent, and an advanced degree for 20 percent; the modal family income (38 percent) was between $20,000 and $30,000; the occupational positions were 9 percent skilled, 20 percent managerial, 6 percent professional, 45 percent housewives, 4 percent students, and 9 percent retired; 81 percent were married, and the remainder were separated, divorced, widowed, or single; 32 percent were Catholic, 29 percent Jewish, 21 percent Protestant, and 14 percent other; 84 percent had children; 68 percent had children of elementary school age or younger, 36 percent had junior or senior high school age children, and 41 percent had college age or adult children.

Eight undergraduate research assistants, four male and four female, served as experimenters; all were white and between 21 and 23 years of age.

TELEVISION PROGRAM SAMPLE

A representative sample of programs was selected from the full week of major network (ABC, CBS, NBC) prime-time TV offerings which had been analyzed for physical contact and sexual behavior (Silverman et al., 1979). From the larger 63-program sample, 15 programs were randomly selected within a proportionate sample by program type (resulting in three hour dramas, three hour crime/adventures, six half-hour situation comedies, and three half-hour variety shows[1]). The commercials were removed from these programs and an audio dub inserted after every four minutes. The programs were shown on an 11-inch black-and-white Sony monitor for 64 percent of the showings (evenly distributed over the 15 programs) and on an 11-inch color Sony monitor for the remaining showings.

The sexual content data for these programs were based on the ratings collected for the larger sample (see Silverman et al., 1978, for coding details). Pairs of trained assistants independently coded the instances of 23 categories of physical contact and sexual behavior (including nonsexual interpersonal touching, affectionate displays, typical sexual behaviors and references, and more controversial sexual practices) tallying separately physical, verbal, and implied modes of presentation. For the current analysis, all categories which had tallied instances (as listed in Table 1) were collapsed over the presentation modes. After calculating intercoder agreement with Pearson's product-moment coefficients (median $r = +.95$, range $+.30$ to $+1.00$), the category frequencies for each program were averaged over the two ratings. A comparison of these category frequencies with those reported for the entire week (Silverman et al., 1979) indicated that the smaller sample was representative of the 1978–79 prime-time network offerings.

PROCEDURE

The study was conducted in the meeting places of the participating groups (e.g., school auditoriums, church basements, group members' homes). At the beginning of the experimental session, each commu-

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[1] Only the first or second half-hour of the variety shows was shown; which half was randomly chosen.

Table 1. Correlation Between the Amount of Various Sexual Behaviors Based on Objective[a] and Subjective[b] Ratings

Sexual Behavior	*Correlation*
Kiss	.58*
Hug	.68**
Ritualistic touching[c]	−.20
Supportive touching[c]	−.34
Affectionate touching[c]	.36
Accidental touching	−.18
Professional touching	.33
Suggestiveness	.65**
Intercourse	.36
Nonsexual aggression	.89**
Nonaggressive child contact	.80**
Aggressive child contact	.99**
Homosexuality	.98**
Prostitution	.90**
Transvestism/transsexualism	.98**
Other atypical sex	−.08

[a] Frequency per half hour, collected by pairs of raters, using Silverman et al. (1978) coding procedure.

[b] Based on estimates of the amount of each behavior averaged across the adults viewing each program.

[c] Objective category correlated with subjective rating of nonaggressive touching.

* $p < .05$.

** $p < .01$.

nity group's participants ($\bar{X}$ = 22 people) were divided into two to six subgroups (subgroup $\bar{X}$ = 8 people). Each subgroup was tested in a different room by one of the research assistants, who explained the purpose of the study and administered each section of the anonymous survey. With the exception of the particular randomly assigned television program shown, the one- to one-and-one-half-hour procedure was identical for each subgroup and included the following five parts in order of presentation.

Demographic Survey. The respondents were asked to complete a survey containing multiple-choice questions about their age, sex, race, marital status, educational level, occupation, family income, religious preference.

Television Program Sexual Content and Suitability Rating Form. The respondents were shown one of the 15 videotaped television programs. Once every four minutes, the research assistant stopped the recorder and asked the participants to rate that program segment for the degree of sexual content presented ("The degree of sexual content in this segment is: none, slight, moderate, or high") and for the suitability of that sexual content for an adult, teen, and child audience ("In terms of *sexual* content, how suitable is this sequence for: most adults, the average 14-year-old, and the average 8-year-old;" the scale choices were unsuitable, slightly suitable, moderately suitable, and very suitable). The research assistant emphasized that the suitability ratings were to be based only on the sexual content, not on other program dimensions (e.g., violence). At the end of the program, the respondents were asked to provide overall ratings on sexual content and suitability for the program.

Behavior Rating Form. The respondents were asked to indicate how often the adult characters in the program they just saw were involved in or spoke about each of the physical contact and sexual behaviors listed in Table 1. They indicated their rating for each listed behavior on a 4-point scale (none, low, moderate, or high amount).

General Attitude Survey. Using agree/disagree items and 5-point scales from "agree strongly" to "disagree strongly," this survey included items about the respondents' own sexual liberalism vs. conservatism, child-rearing practices, and their opinions about sex on TV (e.g., perceived effects on children and family life, TV industry vs. family responsibility, etc.).

Suitability of TV's Presentation of Sexual Topics. Considering their own past viewing experiences, the respondents were asked to indicate how suitably (unsuitable, or slightly, moderately, or very suitable) for each of three audiences (adult, teenage, and child), TV has presented 13 sexual topics.[2]

Results and Discussion

How do the public's subjective ratings of the amount of sexual content on TV programs relate to objective ratings? The adults' estimates of the amount of each category of sexual behavior (Behavior Rating Form) averaged within program were correlated with the frequencies of these behaviors as determined by the formal coding procedure (Silverman et al., 1979). The Pearson product-moment correlations which are presented in Table 1 show that for the majority of physically intimate behaviors, there was a high degree of correspondence between the objective and subjective ratings. The coded categories that related least well to the adults' ratings were other atypical sexual behavior (which was a low frequency category), the five touching categories (which are primarily nonsexual and not of prime interest), and intercourse.

Given the relevance of the intercourse category to sexual content, the correlation coefficients were examined to determine which, if any, of the objective categories were related to the adults' perceptions of intercourse in the TV programs. The subjective ratings of intercourse were significantly related to the objectively coded presence of affectionate touching ($r = +.77, p<.01$), suggestiveness ($r = +.69, p<.01$), kissing ($r = +.60, p<.01$), prostitution ($r = +.55, p<.05$), and other atypical sexual behavior ($r = +.55, p\leq.05$). Apparently, the adults rated the presence of intercourse based on scanty or suggestive evidence and treated the behaviors as nonmutually exclusive categories. In contrast, the trained coders tallied as intercourse only those instances in which heterosexual intercourse was explicitly portrayed, unambiguously implied by context cues, or mentioned with a direct verbal reference. Further, sexual contacts that are generally discouraged by society (e.g., prostitution) were coded under the more specific categories rather than as intercourse.

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[2] The 13 topics rated were childbirth, birth control, abortion, necking or petting, premarital sex, marital sex, extramarital sex, homosexuality, prostitution, striptease, transsexualism (changing one's sex), rape, and child molesting.

Which televised behaviors predict viewer ratings of sexuality and suitability? The objectively coded behavioral frequencies per half hour of programing were correlated with the adults' program ratings of sexual content and suitability averaged within program (Television Program Sexual Content and Suitability Rating Form). As can be seen in Table 2, the behaviors that correlated directly with sexual content ratings and inversely with suitability ratings were: kissing, affection-

Table 2. Correlations Between Objectively Coded Behavioral Frequencies[a] and Adult Ratings of Program Sexual Content and Suitability[b]

	Sexual Content	*Adult Suitability*	*Teen Suitability*	*Child Suitability*
Kiss	.61**	−.52*	−.67**	−.68**
Hug	.42	−.17	−.27	−.33
Ritualistic touching	−.37	.18	.31	.34
Supportive touching	.03	−.21	−.12	−.07
Accidental touching	−.19	.11	.11	.20
Professional touching	−.09	.01	.02	.02
Affectionate touching	.72**	−.68**	−.79**	−.76**
Suggestiveness	.70**	−.64**	−.69**	−.68**
Intercourse	.25	−.43	−.34	−.36
Nonsexual aggression	−.03	−.34	−.15	.13
Nonaggressive child contact	−.41	.29	.38	.39
Aggressive child contact	−.25	.16	.20	.17
Homosexuality	.37	−.35	−.51*	−.51*
Prostitution	.43*	−.57*	−.53*	−.45*
Transvestism/transsexualism	.20	−.21	−.30	−.28
Other atypical sex	.43*	−.57*	−.53*	−.45*

[a] Per half hour of programing.
[b] Overall program ratings averaged over the adults viewing each program.
* $p < .05$.
** $p < .01$.

ate touching, suggestiveness, prostitution, and other atypical sexual behaviors. In addition, homosexuality, while related neither to sexual content nor adult suitability ratings, was negatively correlated with teen and child suitability judgments.[3]

Thus, there were certain behaviors which triggered judgments that sexual content was both present and unsuitable. It should be noted that, as instructed, the adults seemed to be making their judgments of suitability on the basis of only the sexual content; the amount of nonsexual aggression in the programs did not relate to the judgments of suitability even though the respondents objected to TV violence as much as, if not more than, TV sex as indicated by their responses to the general attitude survey.

Since the objectively coded frequency of intercourse references did not correspond well with the adults' subjective estimates of this category, these subjective estimates were correlated with the mean program ratings of sexual content and suitability. Those programs judged by adults to contain intercourse were considered highly sexual ($r = +.87, p < .01$) and unsuitable for children, teenagers, and adults ($r = -.95, -.96$, and $-.86$ respectively, $p < .01$ in all cases).

Which sexual topics are considered unsuitably presented on TV? Since the sample of 15 programs did not include the full range of sexual behaviors which currently appears on television, the respondents were asked to consider their home viewing and to indicate how suitably television has presented 13 sexual topics for the adult, teen, and child audiences (Suitability of TV's Presentation of Sexual Topics). For every topic, the percentage of respondents considering it unsuitable increased and the percentage considering it very suitable decreased as the reference point changed from the adult to the teen to the child audience.

More than 50 percent of the respondents rated 10 of the 13 topics (including abortion, necking or petting, homosexuality, transsexualism, prostitution, rape, extramarital sex, premarital sex, child molesting, and striptease) as unsuitably presented for children. Regardless of whether child viewers actually witnessed or were intended to witness the listed topics, the surveyed adults made extremely harsh judgments about the suitability of TV's treatment of these topics when children comprised the considered audience. Indeed, televised portrayal of childbirth was the only topic which failed to receive a resounding veto for child viewers, with 59 percent of the respondents reporting to have seen slightly, moderately, or very suitable presentations.[4]

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[3] The same correlational analysis was performed using the four-minute sequence ratings; however, to assure independence of ratings, for each adult the subjective rating of only one randomly determined sequence was entered into the group average. Thus, each subjective sequence rating was based on the mean of 20–40 adults. Since the magnitude of the correlations between objective and subjective ratings was virtually identical whether sequence or overall program ratings were considered, all subsequent analyses were performed on only the overall program data.

In general, the suitability judgments for teenage audiences were somewhat more moderate and variable than they were for children. For some topics, the percentage of respondents who experienced very suitable portrayals was larger than the percentage who experienced unsuitable portrayals (specifically childbirth and birth control). As for the less extreme sexual topics (e.g., abortion, petting, and marital sex), the percentage of people who judged past TV portrayals to be even slightly suitable was at least twice as high as the percentage who judged them unsuitable for teenage viewing. Nevertheless, at least 40 percent of the adults rated as unsuitable for teenage viewing TV's portrayals of striptease, rape, prostitution, extramarital sex, and child molesting.

In terms of the suitability ratings for an adult audience, the television industry seems to have fared quite well. Only a small percentage of people considered any of the 13 topics in their past TV viewing experience to have been unsuitably presented for adult audiences. The most harshly criticized were past portrayals of two aggressive behaviors (child molesting and rape) and homosexuality, which were the only topics to be rated as unsuitable by more than 20 percent of the respondents.

What viewer characteristics are predictive of sexual content suitability and topic suitability ratings? Nine viewer characteristics were selected as possible determinants of adults' judgments of how suitable television's sexual content is for adult, teen, and child audiences. These demographic and personal attributes were correlated with two sets of suitability judgments: the overall program suitability ratings of sexual content in the episodes shown in the study, and the ratings of sexual topic suitability based on home viewing. The latter set of scores were derived by collapsing within audience age group the adults' ratings of the suitability of TV's past presentations of the 13 sexual topics.

Table 3 presents the viewer characteristics and their contribution to explained variance in the suitability ratings. Overall, the characteristics that were related to the suitability ratings were consistent with those reported in sexual attitude surveys (*Time*, 1977). Specifi-

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[4] There were a number of respondents who spontaneously mentioned the ABC Afterschool Special "My Mom's Having a Baby" (which was rebroadcast only a few months prior to our survey) in this context, so that this program might account for the more liberal opinion registered for the topic of childbirth.

Table 3. Percentage of Variance Accounted for[a] by Demographic Characteristics in Determining Ratings of (1) Sexual Content Suitability and (2) Sexual/Topic Suitability[b]

Demographic Variables	*Suitability for Adults*		*Suitability for Teens*		*Suitability for Children*	
	(1)	*(2)*	*(1)*	*(2)*	*(1)*	*(2)*
Age	(−)6.66**	(−)10.72**	(−)4.62**	(−)4.86**	(−)4.59**	(−)3.55**
Sex	.66	1.01*	.17	.04	.08	.71
Marital status	1.70	2.24*	.59	3.25**	.74	4.54**
Education	.16	7.43**	.33	6.66**	.09	5.76**
Income[c]	.69	1.32*	0	.23	0	.98
Religion	.73	7.02**	1.25	12.74**	2.60**	23.21**
Frequency of church attendance	(−).86*	(−)4.33**	(−)6.70*	(−)6.41**	(−)1.80**	(−)7.69**
Sexual attitude[d]	1.03**	8.88**	3.43**	14.77**	3.71**	14.96**
Sex openness with children[e]	.05	6.10**	1.14*	11.85**	1.61**	10.98**

[a] After the variance attributable to program type was removed. (−) indicates inverse relationship.

[b] Collapsed over 13 sexual topics.

[c] After variance attributable to education removed.

[d] Based on 5-point self-rating scale of conservatism-to-liberalism.

[e] Based on extent of agreement (5-point "agree strongly" to "disagree strongly" scale) with two statements: "If young children are told a lot about sex, they are likely to experiment with sex before they should," and, "A parent should wait for a child to ask a direct question about sexuality before discussing sexual topics with him or her."

* $p < .05$.

** $p < .01$.

cally, individuals who were most critical of television's sexual content were older, rated themselves as having conservative sexual attitudes, affiliated with traditional religions, attended religious services frequently, were not highly educated, and opposed early sex education for children. Separated and divorced females tended to be slightly less critical of the sexual content in their own television viewing experiences.

What are the respondents' attitudes about TV sex? The respondents believed TV violence to be more of a problem than TV sex. Ninety-one percent agreed with the statement, "There is too much violence on TV," while only 63 percent agreed with the parallel statement for sexual content. Further, when asked, "Which is more harmful for children to see on TV?" violence was noted by 48 percent and sex by only 3 percent; nevertheless, 44 percent responded that "both are equally bad." The predominance of violence over sex as a concern may relate to the geographic area in which the study was conducted. It is possible that the people in this area are generally more liberal about sex and more concerned about violence than a similar sample of people from the South or Midwest would be. In light of this, the fact that more than half the sample considered TV sex as unsuitable for viewing by children cannot be overlooked.

When parents were asked to specify the reasons for the concern about TV sex, and to say what would happen if children are exposed to televised sexual themes that are new to them, many of the respondents felt that such experiences lead children to "ask questions about topics they are too young to understand" (48 percent), "be confused or upset" (41 percent), "use language that is unacceptable to the parents" (41 percent), "tolerate behaviors or lifestyles in others that are unacceptable to the parents" (35 percent), or "experiment with sex-related behaviors that are unacceptable to the parents" (20 percent).

However, there was far from a consensus of response to this question or to others about possible effects of exposure to TV sex. Forty-five percent of the parents felt that receiving new sex information from TV might cause children to "initiate useful discussions with their parents," and 19 percent felt children might "learn something positive." Further, 73 percent of the adults indicated that at some time sexual content on TV had prompted a discussion in their household, and that the ensuing discussion was a positive or useful experience for 51 percent of these and a negative one for only 5 percent. A majority (65 percent) disagreed with a linkage between teenage promiscuity and televised sex; and more than half of the respondents (55 percent) perceived televised sexual innuendos to be harmless.

There were also wide variations in the adults' responses to questions about how objectionable TV content is handled in the family situation and the broadcast industry's responsibilities regarding such content. When objectionable sexual content appears on TV when they are viewing with their children, half the parents (49 percent) claimed to use it as an opportunity for a discussion with their children, while a quarter of them claimed they ignore it (26 percent), distract the child (23 percent), or change the channel (23 percent). Only a small minority make such active protests as "writing a letter to the network or advertiser" (4 percent) or "making note of the sponsors and boycotting the companies' products" (5 percent).

In terms of the responsibility for controlling what children view, only 37 percent agreed with the statement, "Networks should not be forced to decrease the amount of sex or violence on TV. It's up to parents to control what their children watch." Morover, 83 percent agreed with the family viewing time principle that programs broadcasted before 9 P.M. should be suitable for a child audience, and 84 percent found the "mature audience" warnings to be a desirable broadcasting practice.

Conclusion

Despite the fact that this was a nonrandom sample from a predominantly white, female, suburban New York population and that the results cannot be generalized nationally, the findings of this study strongly suggest that adults are uneasy about children being exposed to televised sex. There seem to be specific behaviors and topics that are considered particularly taboo for children and adolescents. However, given the homogeneity of the sample, there was tremendous variability in the reasons why this content provoked concern. Indeed, some respondents felt that benefits could accrue from such exposure. One might anticipate even greater diversity of response in a survey using a national probability sample. In any case, the majority of respondents indicated that both the broadcast industry and parents were jointly responsible for what children see on TV. Unfortunately, at the present time, empirical evidence on the effects of TV sex is nonexistent. Research addressing this issue would surely help broadcasters and parents to take sensible and effective action.

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Children's Dispositions Toward Proprietary Drugs and the Role of Television Drug Advertising

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CONCERN has been expressed that Americans are becoming a nation of pill takers. Many critics contend that this behavior is learned in childhood and that it is encouraged by TV advertising for proprietary (advertised nonprescription or "over-the-counter") drugs. However, knowledge of childhood dispositions toward proprietary drugs is lacking, as is information on the potential relationship of TV drug advertising to these dispositions. This lack of information caused the Federal Communications Commission to deny a petition by the attorneys general of 19 states seeking to prohibit TV advertising for proprietary drugs until after 9:00 P.M., when fewer children would be in the audience (Attorneys General, 1975). Proprietary drugs cannot be advertised on children's programs, but they can be advertised during adult and family programs, which constitute about 85 percent of children's viewing (Adler et al., 1980). Presumably, the proposed ban

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Abstract This study of 668 children aged 8 to 13 from diverse social backgrounds suggests that children are, to a measurable extent, influenced by exposure to TV advertising for proprietary drugs but that the net result is moderate dispositions rather than strongly favorable dispositions toward these products. Subgroup analysis confirms the generality of these conclusions: some subgroups appear to be more responsive to TV drug advertising but none show strongly favorable attitudes or behaviors toward proprietary drugs.

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could be reconsidered should subsequent evidence suggest that TV drug advertising does predispose children toward proprietary drugs to an undue extent.

Previous studies of dispositions toward proprietary drugs among children (Atkin, 1978) and teenagers (Milavsky et al., 1975) suggest two important but tentative conclusions examined in greater depth in the present study. The first is that young people's dispositions toward proprietary drugs are *not* strongly favorable, as many critics have assumed. Atkin (1978: 74), for example, asked 256 children aged 10 to 12 the following question: "When you get a cold/stomachache, how much do you take some medicine for it?" Response alternatives and percentage responses were: always (12.5 percent), usually (24.5 percent), sometimes (44.5 percent), never (18.5 percent). Similarly, Milavsky et al. (1975: 473) obtained the following results with a sample of teenage boys: "You should take some [proprietary] drug preparations: every day (3 percent), whenever you feel a bit bad (11 percent), only if you feel pretty bad (40 percent), only if you feel really bad (35 percent), never (11 percent)." The modal responses and the infrequent strongly favorable responses suggest moderate dispositions toward proprietary drugs in childhood and teenage years.

A second important but tentative conclusion from these prior studies is that children's and teenagers' dispositions toward proprietary drugs are only weakly related to their exposure to TV drug advertising. Using dependent measures similar to the one exemplified above, Atkin (1978) found correlations in the .07 to .22 range with children's exposure to TV drug advertising, with only about half of the correlations reaching the .05 level of significance. Milavsky et al. (1975) found a Tau C correlation of only .01 between the "willingness" measure described above and teenagers' exposure to TV drug advertising, although a slightly higher and significant correlation of .12 was found between exposure and usage of proprietary drugs.

Several criticisms may be made of these prior studies, however, which lead us to regard the two conclusions as tentative. Atkin (1978) focused on a limited set of proprietary drugs, including cold and stomachache remedies but excluding cough and headache remedies. Milavsky et al. (1975) used a vague definition in their "willingness" measure ("some drug preparations") and used isolated brand names rather than representative proprietary drug categories in their usage measure. (Usage is a questionable variable where children are concerned since children rarely control proprietary drug usage, although it may be more applicable to teenagers, as in the Milavsky et al. study. The present study examines requests to parents as well as usage). Atkin (1978) employed a hybrid and possibly uninterpretable measure of TV drug advertising exposure in which TV viewing was multiplied by reported attention to four proprietary drug commercials. Milavsky et al., on the other hand, employed a cumulative measure of TV drug advertising exposure which appeared to have considerable construct validity. However, neither study examined the reliability of measures, and information about reliability is essential for estimating the true population correlations from sample data.

Moreover, there exists the possibility that certain children may be more strongly predisposed towards proprietary drugs, and perhaps toward advertising for proprietary drugs, than other children. This possibility was examined in the Atkin and Milavsky et al. studies through partial correlation. However, these partial correlations were subject to the same potential problems noted above in conjunction with the overall results. Also, absolute levels of dispositions for various subgroups were not examined. The importance of examining subgroup trends that may be at variance with aggregate trends is clearly illustrated in Cronbach (1957) and Argyle and Delin (1965), where ample evidence is provided for relationships that apply only to certain subgroups of the population. In particular, it seems unlikely that all children are socialized similarly about proprietary drugs and that they are equally receptive to proprietary drug advertising. The "vulnerable subgroups" possibility was therefore reexamined in the present study.

The measures for this study were developed following extensive open-ended discussions with children about their attitudes toward common illnesses and proprietary drugs. A draft questionnaire was then pretested with a large sample of younger and lower SES children to ensure that they as well as older and higher SES children could understand the questions and the rating procedures. Based on these results, a final questionnaire was developed for the main study which incorporated items contributing to the overall index measures with high reliability.

Children's dispositions toward proprietary drugs were conceptualized in terms of traditional cognitive, affective, and conative dimensions of attitude (McGuire, 1969), i.e., belief in the efficacy of proprietary drugs, liking to take them, and intention to take them; and two behavioral dimensions, i.e., requests to parents, and reported usage. The measures are shown with other measures employed in the study in Table 1. Each disposition measure is based on an index summed over the four most widely used proprietary drug categories: cold, cough, headache, and stomachache remedies (Target Group Index, 1975). Items for these indexes were interspersed throughout the questionnaire. Reliabilities as measured by Cronbach's coefficient alpha (α) with one exception were .70 or higher, indicating suitability for basic research (Nunnally, 1978). The exception was usage (α = .52), and this measure is discussed separately in the results section.

Children's exposure to TV drug advertising was measured in the same way as in the Milavsky et al. study (1975: 462), except that we used a current measure (one-month retrospective) rather than a cumulative one. Milavsky et al. demonstrated that the measure validly captures drug commercial exposure and not just general TV viewing level, although the two phenomena are of course highly related. We chose to measure current exposure, hoping to represent children's immediate responsiveness to TV drug advertising. Not having access to children's viewing histories, we could only examine possible cumulative exposure effects through the surrogate variable of age.

Five subgroups of children were identified as potentially more "vulnerable" than other children. It was expected that these children would exhibit more favorable dispositions toward proprietary drugs and stronger relationships between dispositions and exposure to TV drug advertising. These subgroups are as follows: (1) young children, who with less cognitive development and experience may be less discriminating toward proprietary drugs and proprietary drug advertising (the implicit counter-hypothesis, suggested by the long-run cumulative-effects position, is that older children would be more favorably disposed toward these products and toward TV drug advertising); (2) children from educationally "disadvantaged" families, who may receive less instruction about proprietary drugs and the way they are advertised and therefore may be more favorably disposed toward these products and toward advertising for them; (3) children who suffer frequently from the types of illnesses for which proprietary drugs are intended, with the expectation that more frequent illness may be instrumental in developing favorable dispositions toward proprietary drugs and toward proprietary drug advertising as a potentially relevant source of information about illness relief; (4) high illness anxiety children, for whom anxiety may function as a relevant motivational (emotional drive) variable which increases dispositions toward proprietary drugs and enhances responsiveness to proprietary drug advertising, and (5) (a subset of) older children who are occasionally allowed to take proprietary drugs without parental supervision, and who therefore may exhibit less "restrained" usage behavior and take a more personal interest in proprietary drug advertising.

These five subgroups generate five "pairs" of directional hypotheses to be tested in the study. In order to infer that TV drug advertising increases children's vulnerability to these products, it would have to

Table 1. Variables and Measures

Variable	*Measure*		*Coefficient* α
Exposure variable			
TV drug advertising exposure	Number of proprietary drug commercials per program as obtained from Broadcast Advertisers Reports (1977) weighted by viewing frequency, based on past month's viewing of a randomly selected list of 35 shows excluding shows during school hours and after 11:30 P.M.		.73
Disposition variables			
Belief in efficacy of proprietary drugs	Four-item index.[a] Sample item: "When I have a cold, cold medicine can make me feel better." Scoring: 1 = strongly disagree to 4 = strongly agree.[b]		.81
Affect toward taking proprietary drugs	Four-item index.[a] Sample item: "When I have a cold, I like to take cold medicine." Scoring: 1 = strongly disagree to 4 = strongly agree.[b]		.81
Intention to take proprietary drugs	Four-item index.[a] Sample item: "When I have a cold, I want to take cold medicine." Scoring: 1 = never to 4 = always.[c]		.75
Requests for proprietary drugs	Four-item index. [a] Sample item: "When I have a cold, I ask my parents for cold medicines." Scoring: 1 = never to 4 = always.[c]		.76
Usage of proprietary drugs	Four-item index.[a] Sample item: "Since school started in September, how many times have your parents given you cold medicines?" Scoring: 1 = never to 5 = five or more times.[d]		.52
Subgroup variables			
Age	Younger children = grade 3 (33%)	Older children = grades 5 and 7 (67%)	n.a.[e]
Education level of primary head of household	Low education = primary head did not finish high school (20%)	High education = primary head high school graduate or higher (80%)	n.a.[e]
Illness frequency	High illness = top quartile on 4-item illness frequency index.[a] Sample item: "How many times a year do you get colds?" Scoring: 1 = never to 5 = five or more times.[d] (25%)	Low illness = lower three quarters of sample on the illness frequency index. (75%)	.70
Illness anxiety	High anxiety = top quartile on 4-item illness anxiety index.[a] Sample item: "I worry a lot about getting colds." Scoring: 1 = strongly disagree to 4 = strongly agree.[b] (25%)	Low anxiety = lower three quarters of sample on the illness anxiety index. (75%)	.84

Table 1. *(Continued)*

Variable	*Measure*		*Coefficient* α
Medicine control	Self-administration = grade 7 children who checked other than "never" responses on 4-item medicine control index.[a] Sample item: "Do your parents let you take cold medicine without asking them?" Scoring: 1 = never to 4 = always.[c] (68%)[f]	No self-administration = remainder of grade 7 children, who responded "never" to all four items on the medicine control index. (32%)[f]	.80

[a] Four-item indexes are based on the four symptoms most often treated by proprietary drugs: colds, coughs, headaches and stomachaches; and on the corresponding o-t-c medicine categories: cold medicine, cough medicine, headache medicine and stomachache medicine. Item scores were averaged to obtain mean index scores.

[b] Actual response format for these Likert-type scales was: NO ☐ no ☐ yes ☐ YES ☐, scored 1, 2, 3 and 4, respectively. This format has been found appropriate for children of the present age range (see Rossiter, 1977).

[c] Actual response format for these frequency questions was: ☐ never ☐ sometimes ☐ most times ☐ always, scored 1, 2, 3 and 4, respectively.

[d] Children were asked to circle a number, corresponding to the exact frequency, from the series 1, 2, 3, 4, 5+, where 5+ indicated five or more times.

[e] Single item measure for which internal consistency reliability is not applicable.

[f] Subgroups based on medicine control were confined to the oldest children in the sample (seventh grade) as the incidence of self-administration was very small below this age level.

be shown, first, that the particular subgroup has more strongly favorable dispositions toward proprietary drugs than other children, and, second, that their dispositions are more strongly related to TV drug advertising exposure.

The five subgroups are not mutually exclusive. However, it was felt that the policy relevance of the present research would be served better by examining relatively large and easily identifiable subgroups of children based on single classificatory variables than by examining the smaller subgroups that result when multiple identifying variables are used.

The sample for this study was drawn from inner city and suburban areas of Philadelphia, in March 1977. Parental permission letters were distributed to 1,050 children in six school districts (12 schools), representing a range of SES backgrounds, in the third, fifth, and seventh grades, an age range encompassing 8- to 13-year-olds. Of this number, 17 percent did not complete or return parental permission letters or were absent from school on the test date. A further 6 percent provided incomplete data (defined as one item or more omitted) or exhibited extreme language problems, and were deleted from the analysis. Another 2 percent were randomly removed from the sample because they were siblings of other children in the sample, and a follow-up interview with mothers was planned to obtain SES data, with each mother reporting on only one child. In 11 percent of cases, mothers and guardians could not be located or satisfactorily interviewed after two callbacks, resulting in further sample reduction. The various loss factors were judged unavoidable within the resources of the study. Losses did not appear to be systematic by age or SES groups.

The final sample for this analysis comprised 668 children, approximately equally divided by sex, at three grade levels: third ($N = 218$), fifth ($N = 222$) and seventh ($N = 228$). The SES profile of the sample, according to equally weighted head of household occupational and educational status, was as follows: upper middle class, 14 percent; lower middle class, 31 percent; working class, 34 percent; and disadvantaged, 21 percent. A large proportion of the disadvantaged group happened to be black, whereas the other SES groups were predominantly white. However, race was not a theoretically relevant variable in our study and thus was not specifically recorded.

Results

Children's dispositions toward proprietary drugs, for the total sample, are shown in Table 2. With the exception of one dispositional

Table 2. Mean Dispositions Toward Proprietary Drugs and Correlations with TV Drug Advertising Exposure (Total Sample)

	Total Sample (N = 668)			
Measure	*Mean*	*S.D.*	*Correlation with Exposure (Uncorrected)*[a]	*Correlation with Exposure (Corrected)*[b]
Belief[c]	3.2	.6	.12*	.16*
Affect	2.6	.8	.13*	.17*
Intention	2.5	.8	.16*	.21*
Requests	2.5	.8	.22*	.30*
Usage[d]	2.5	1.3	.06*	.10*
TV drug ad exposure[e]	13.8	8.2		

[a] All correlations are partialed for grade level; significance levels are based on 1-tailed tests.

[b] Correction for attenuation = $r_{xy}/(\sqrt{r_{xx}}\ \sqrt{r_{yy}})$.

[c] Range for first four measures is 1 to 4 with 4 = highest.

[d] Range for usage measure is 0 to 5 with 5 = highest.

[e] Measured in terms of number of 30-second drug commercials per week.

* $p < .05$.

measure, belief in the efficacy of proprietary drugs, the children's mean dispositions are very close to the midpoint of each scale. Specifically, the "average" 8- to 13-year-old child: agrees but does not strongly agree that proprietary drugs are effective; exhibits rather neutral affect, neither liking nor disliking to take these products; intends to take proprietary drugs about half the time when common illness symptoms occur; requests proprietary drugs about half the time when common illnesses occur; and, with parents presumably playing a deciding role, takes these products about 20 times a year (i.e., an average of five times a year for each of the four drug categories). The somewhat higher mean responses for the belief measure are an exception to the midpoint trends of the other measures. Children seem to exhibit considerable belief in the efficacy of proprietary drugs.

The relationship of advertising to children's proprietary drug dispositions is also shown in Table 2. It should be noted that all correlations, which are Pearson product-moment coefficients, have been adjusted for the effects of less than perfect reliability in the component measures and are thus upper-limit estimates. Unadjusted correlations are shown in Table 2 to give an indication of the effect of this adjustment. Also, with the exception of age-specific results, all correlations have been partialed for grade level to eliminate a spurious increase in correlation due to mutually declining dispositions and exposure levels with increasing age.

According to our estimate, the average child is exposed to about 14 drug commercials per week, or approximately two each day in a typical day of TV viewing. The correlations between exposure and dispositions are, for the most part, relatively small, although all are statistically significant. Because of children's relatively strong beliefs in the efficacy of proprietary drugs, noted above, we further analyzed the relationship of this dispositional variable to advertising exposure ($r = .16$) and to proprietary drug use ($r = .20$, not shown) through partial correlation analysis controlling, respectively, for use and exposure. This analysis suggested that children's belief in the efficacy of proprietary drugs may be partly the result of presumably favorable usage experience as well as partly conditioned by advertising, regardless of usage experience. The correlations from which these relationships are inferred, however, are not large. Somewhat larger is the correlation between current exposure and requests for proprietary drugs ($r = .30$), where the shared variance is almost 10 percent.

Children's requests do not translate directly into usage, however. The correlation between advertising exposure and usage of proprietary drugs is quite small ($r = .10$). Because of the low reliability of the usage measure, we separately examined the correlations for each type of proprietary drug entering into the usage measure. These correlations were .13 for stomachache remedies, .09 for cough remedies, .04 for cold remedies, and .01 for headache remedies. The low overall usage correlation therefore seems adequately representative of the individual relationships. It is consistent with the supposition that parents mediate children's proprietary drug requests and thereby control children's use of these products.

Turning now to the subgroup hypotheses, it may be recalled that the hypotheses form "pairs." An inference of greater vulnerability for a particular subgroup requires significantly more favorable mean dispositions *and* significantly higher correlations of these dispositions with TV drug advertising exposure. Subgroup means are shown in Table 3 and subgroup correlations in Table 4.

Younger children have significantly more favorable mean dispositions toward proprietary drugs than older children do, although, interestingly, their usage rate is not significantly higher. Younger children are also exposed to significantly more TV drug advertising than older children, a difference of about 15 versus 13 commercial exposures per week. However, the correlational results do not indicate that younger children are more strongly influenced than older children by TV drug advertising. Only one of five correlations is significantly higher for younger children and on three measures the age differences are in the opposite direction. Consequently, the results do not support the hypothesis that younger children are more strongly affected than older children by exposure to TV drug advertising. Neither, inci-

Table 3. Mean Dispositions Toward Proprietary Drugs (Subgroups)[a]

	Age		*Parent Education*		*Illness Frequency*		*Illness Anxiety*		*Self-Administration*[b]	
	Younger (*N*=*218*)	*Older* (*N*=*450*)	*Low* (*N*=*132*)	*High* (*N*=*529*)	*High* (*N*=*171*)	*Low* (*N*=*497*)	*High* (*N*=*166*)	*Low* (*N*=*502*)	*Some* (*N*=*155*)	*None* (*N*=*55*)
Belief	3.5*	3.0	3.2	3.2	3.3	3.2	3.5*	3.1	2.9	2.9
Affect	2.8*	2.4	2.6	2.6	2.7*	2.5	2.9*	2.5	2.4	2.3
Intention	2.7*	2.4	2.6	2.4	2.7*	2.4	2.6*	2.4	2.4*	2.1
Requests	2.8*	2.4	2.5	2.5	2.7*	2.4	2.7*	2.4	2.2	2.3
Usage	2.6	2.4	2.5	2.5	3.2*	2.4	2.7*	2.4	2.3	2.1
TV drug ad exposure	15.2*	13.1	17.2*	12.9	15.2*	13.3	17.2*	12.7	11.7	13.7

[a] Scale ranges as in Table 2.

[b] Seventh grade only.

* Significant mean differences in the direction of the first-mentioned subgroup in each pair (one-tailed tests). $p < .05$.

Table 4. Correlations of Proprietary Drug Dispositions with TV Drug Advertising Exposure (Subgroups)[a]

	Age		*Parent Education*		*Illness Frequency*		*Illness Anxiety*		*Self-Administration*[b]	
	Younger (*N*=*218*)	*Older* (*N*=*450*)	*Low* (*N*=*132*)	*High* (*N*=*529*)	*High* (*N*=*171*)	*Low* (*N*=*497*)	*High* (*N*=*166*)	*Low* (*N*=*502*)	*Some* (*N*=*155*)	*None* (*N*=*55*)
Belief	−.02	.28	.06	.20	.23	.13	.26*	.07	.23	.29
Affect	.22	.14	.13	.17	.28*	.12	.39*	.02	.12	.26
Intention	.29*	.16	.44*	.12	.15	.22	.43*	.09	.19	.23
Requests	.26	.33	.39	.27	.25	.30	.43*	.21	.33	.34
Usage	.03	.15	.12	.10	.00	.09	.04	.07	.38	.23

[a] Correlations corrected for attentuation as in Table 2. All except those in the first and last two columns have been partialed for grade level since they involve children of different ages (see text).

[b] Seventh grade only.

* Significant differences in the direction of the first-mentioned subgroup in each pair (one-tailed tests). $p < .05$.

dentally, do they support the counter-hypothesis that older children are more vulnerable due to cumulative exposure.

Children from educationally "disadvantaged" families are exposed to a considerably higher level of TV drug advertising than children from other families: an average of 17 versus 13 commercial exposures per week. The correlational results suggest that disadvantaged children are somewhat more strongly affected by TV drug advertising than other children; exposure seems to have a rather sizable influence on their behavioral tendencies in the form of intentions ($r = .44$) and requests ($r = .39$) for these products. However, the comparison of mean results shows that educationally disadvantaged children do not differ from other children in terms of proprietary drug dispositions or usage levels. It seems, therefore, that the variance in behavioral tendencies is more highly related to TV drug advertising exposure for educationally disadvantaged children than for other children but that their mean tendencies toward proprietary drug usage are no different. Thus, on the basis of lack of mean differences we must reject the vulnerability hypothesis for the educationally disadvantaged subgroup.

Children who have a relatively high illness frequency are significantly more favorably disposed toward proprietary drugs than other children on four out of five measures, including usage, with the latter finding not unexpected. These children also are exposed to somewhat more TV drug advertising. However, the correlational results lend little credence to the argument that higher exposure results in more favorable dispositions, with the minor exception of the correlation for affect, indicating the tendency to like (or not mind) taking these products when symptoms occur. The more favorable dispositions of children who are more frequently ill appear to be unrelated to TV drug advertising exposure. The lack of correlational support in this case leads us to reject the vulnerability hypothesis for this subgroup.

The vulnerability hypothesis is, however, supported for children with more anxiety about illness. These children exhibit significantly more favorable dispositions toward proprietary drugs on all five measures. Their exposure to TV drug advertising is also considerably higher than that of other children, at an average of 17 versus 13 commercial exposures per week. The correlational results in this instance reveal a fairly strong relationship between exposure and dispositions. Four of the correlations for this subgroup are significantly higher than the correlations for the remainder of the sample, and three are comparatively large (on the order of $r = .40$). The exception is the small correlation between exposure and usage. Overall, the means and correlational results support the hypothesis that children with more anxiety about illness are a vulnerable subgroup but, even in this subgroup, children's dispositions toward proprietary drugs do not seem to be strongly favorable.

Older children who are occasionally allowed to take proprietary drugs on their own initiative constitute the final subgroup investigated in this study. The mean results and the correlational results both lead to rejection of the hypothesis that such children are more vulnerable to TV drug advertising than their seventh-grade peers. However, current exposure to TV drug advertising does appear to have a moderately large correlation with proprietary drug usage among such children ($r = .38$). The latter finding suggests that as parental control is lessened, which occurred in our sample for about three out of four older children, TV drug advertising may affect behavior. It is important to note that we are talking about short-run variation rather than long-run or cumulative effects. The results of Milavsky et al. suggest that the long-run effects of TV drug advertising on proprietary drug use by teenagers, where parental control may be even lower, is quite small (Tau C = .12). Also, even though older children's discretionary use may vary substantially with advertising exposure, our mean results suggest that their overall usage rate is no different from that of children of like age whose usage is parentally controlled. The lack of mean differences therefore leads us to reject the vulnerability hypothesis for this subgroup.

Discussion

The findings of the present study lend general and broader support to the findings of previous studies indicating that children (Atkin, 1978) and teenagers (Milavsky et al., 1975) are not strongly disposed toward usage of proprietary drugs. Children's rather moderate dispositions are to a modest extent influenced by their exposure to proprietary drug advertising on television (to the extent that influence can be inferred from simple correlational relationships) but this influence cannot be regarded as substantial unless 10 to 20 percent shared variance is regarded as substantial. Neither is there an age trend indicative of cumulative or long-run influence. In fact, children's dispositions toward proprietary drugs decline significantly as they grow older and are never very strong.

The present study obtained these findings with broad measures of children's proprietary drug dispositions and upper limit correlation estimates with TV drug advertising exposure that gave every chance for "effects" to emerge. Although the exposure-disposition relationships were examined only through correlation, which does not imply cause and effect, it may be noted that demonstration of strong correlations would be an essential step in a causal inference. Modest correlations, indicating less than 20 percent shared variance, in conjunction with moderate mean levels of dispositions, suggest that the argument that TV drug advertising produces strongly favorable dispositions toward proprietary drugs in childhood would be difficult to sustain in light of the present evidence, even for ostensibly "vulnerable" subsegments of the child population.

It is possible that multivariate analysis, examining the role of TV advertising in the context of other personal and social factors (see Shimp and Dyer, 1979), would find TV drug advertising to be an even smaller contributor to children's proprietary drug dispositions than we have found here. This possibility is suggested in an alternative (regression) analysis of the total sample data by Robertson et al. (1979). The present analysis chose to ignore the complexity of multivariate possibilities (beyond the exposure variable in interaction with the respective subgroup variables) in the interest of providing straightforward, if artificially isolated estimates of the role of TV drug advertising. Consequently, the advertising correlations should be regarded as upper limit estimates of exposure "effects" which are probably not reached in reality but are nevertheless informative, as upper limit estimates, for policy makers.

What do the present findings suggest for public policy? Current policy prohibits TV advertising for proprietary drugs on children's programs and does not allow such advertising at other times to be expressly directed to children. Further restrictions on TV drug advertising, e.g., until after 9:00 P.M. as proposed in the attorneys general petition to the FCC, do not seem warranted. Our findings indicate that children are exposed to TV drug advertising while watching general or adult programs, and that this advertising may to a small extent influence their attitudes and behaviors toward these products—at least on a short-run basis. However, children's attitudes and behaviors toward proprietary drugs remain at levels which can be described as moderate. Moreover, as children grow older and accumulate more experience with proprietary drugs and TV drug advertising, their dispositions toward these products become even more moderate. In other words, TV drug advertising does not seem to influence children to an extent that may be regarded as socially harmful or worthy of further legislative attention.

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Adolescents, Television, and Support for Government

DAVID R. BERMAN AND JOHN A. STOOKEY

RESEARCH indicates that television plays an important role as a mediating agency in political socialization (Rubin, 1978; Chaffee et al., 1970; Hollander, 1971). Two key variables that appear to be associated with both cognitive and affective political orientations of children and young adults are the amount of TV viewing and the types of programs viewed. Extensive viewing has been linked with low levels of political knowledge. As Rubin has concluded: "Extensive television viewing, per se, may be dysfunctional for the acquisition of political information and understandings of the workings of government" (Rubin, 1978: 129). On a more positive note, however, Rubin found that adolescents who watched extensive amounts of television displayed less political cynicism.

Most of the research on program content has involved the effects of network news and public affairs programs on viewers. Several researchers have found that these are major independent sources of political information for children and adolescents (Rubin, 1978; Chaffee et al., 1970; Hollander, 1971; Dominick, 1972; Rubin, 1976; Hawkins et al., 1975; Conway et al., 1975; Atkin and Gantz, 1978). Some research on adolescents has linked higher levels of public affairs viewing with more favorable attitudes toward government (Rubin, 1978). Yet, while one might speculate that public affairs programs

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Abstract This research finds that support for government as measured by a feeling thermometer scale is negatively correlated with increased amounts of television viewing by adolescents and varies in affective directions with the types of programs young adults watch.

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may place government institutions in a more positive context than does television programing as a whole, there is also reason to believe that the net impact of news and public affairs programs on viewers is essentially negative. Previous research suggests that network news and public affairs programs have a heavy emphasis on negative information and anti-institutional themes (Robinson, 1976). For this reason and because of television's high credibility, viewers may respond to such broadcasts by "growing more cynical, more frustrated, more despairing" and "increasingly less enamored of their social and political institutions" (Robinson, 1976: 426).

Studies also suggest that certain types of entertainment programs, particularly those containing violence, may influence the political attitudes and behavior of young viewers (Comstock, 1975). The scope of the relationship between the political orientations of adolescents and the wide range of entertainment programs they view, however, has not been explored. This neglect apparently reflects the view that news programs contain more politically relevant stimuli than do entertainment programs, and thus are more likely to influence political orientations (Atkin and Gantz, 1978).

This study expands upon previous research by exploring how the amount of television viewing and the types of programs viewed by adolescents are related to their supportive attitudes toward government. Attention is given to several categories of entertainment programs as well as to news and public affairs programs. Because of the scarcity of previous studies on the relationships of concern in this article the authors have not formulated research hypotheses. Rather, our focus is on the following questions: Is the extent of TV viewing by adolescents correlated positively or negatively with their feelings toward various levels of government? Are different types of programs that young adults view correlated positively or negatively with these feelings?

Research Methods and Measures

Data for this study were gathered in the summer of 1978 in the Phoenix, Arizona, metropolitan area as part of a larger project funded by the Federal Law Enforcement Assistance Administration to determine the needs and problems of the area's youth. Interviewers were hired with funds from this project. Most of those hired had previous interviewing experience, and all were given extensive training including supervised practice interviews.

Interviews were conducted with a random sample of 600 adolescents aged 13 through 17. A multistage sampling design involving the random selection of census tracts, blocks, and dwelling units was used. Selected dwelling units were screened for teenagers. If a teenager lived in a selected home, he or she was interviewed. If more than one youth live in the selected dwelling, a random procedure based on age and sex was used to choose the respondent. If the initial unit was not the home of a 13- to 17-year-old, interviewers used a preestablished decision rule to select another unit on the block. The second unit was then screened for teenagers. This procedure was continued until a respondent was located. The interviewers were instructed to make at least three callbacks to attempt to complete the interview with the selected youth. If an interview was still not possible, a random replacement method was used. The response rate for originally selected youth was 81 percent.

Level of TV watching was operationalized as the adolescent's response to the question of how many hours per day on the average he or she watched television. Support for government was defined in three separate ways: support for the federal government, support for the state government, and support for the city government. Measures for the level of support were obtained by asking respondents to rate the levels of government on a "feeling" thermometer.[1] Those surveyed were told that ratings between 1 degree and 49 degrees indicated a cool feeling, a 50-degree rating indicated a neutral (neither cool nor warm) feeling, and that ratings beyond 51 degrees indicated a favorable or warm feeling with 99 degrees being the most favorable.

In order to explore the impact of certain program types on support for government, each respondent was given a checklist of 160 regularly scheduled programs currently being aired in the Phoenix metropolitan area and was asked to mark which of these he/she regularly watched. The list included all the network programs (including network reruns on an independent channel) and locally produced news and public affairs programs which were listed in the *TV Guide* for the week of August 1, 1978.

Program types were then isolated by factor analysis. Programs which loaded strongly on a factor (a loading of greater than .35) were used to create an index of the degree to which each type of program was watched. Indexes were based on the number of programs within each type watched by the teenager, divided by the number of programs of that type. Thus, each teenager was given an index score for each program type that varied between 0 (never watched any of the programs) to 1 (watched all the programs). These indexes served as independent variables to specify the relationship between type of TV viewing and support for government.

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[1] The "feeling" thermometer device was modeled after the one found in Miller and Miller (1977: 916).

The sample had an average of four hours of television viewing per day, with a standard deviation of 2.08. Factor analysis of the program-watching behavior revealed six identifiable program types. These factors, and the programs which loaded most strongly on them, are summarized in Table 1. The indexes for each factor were then calculated. The mean and standard deviation of these are shown in Table 2.

The responses given by the adolescents on the governmental feeling thermometers are summarized in Table 3. As the table demonstrates, the mean is slightly higher for state government than for city government and higher for city than for federal government. Table 4 shows a substantial correlation between support for the various levels of government. There is, however, enough variation to warrant maintaining the distinction between them, rather than combining them into a single "support for government" scale. The validity of this approach

Table 1. Program Types as Determined by Factor Analysis

Factor	*Examples of Programs Which Load Strongly on the Factor*
Adult entertainment	M.A.S.H., Alice, Love Boat, One Day at a Time, Fantasy Island
Juvenile entertainment	Happy Days, Laverne and Shirley, Wonder Woman, The Wonderful World of Disney
Cartoons	Dynomutt, Jabberjaw, Fat Albert, etc.
News	Local and National News
Public affairs	Meet the Press, Face the Nation, several Public Broadcasting shows
Police shows	Baretta, Police Story, Police Woman, Kojak, Adam 12, Starsky and Hutch

Table 2. Summary Statistics of TV Viewing Indexes

Program Type	*Mean*	*Standard Deviation*
Adult entertainment	.363	.217
Juvenile entertainment	.403	.243
Cartoons	.123	.209
News	.257	.319
Public affairs	.037	.140
Police shows	.338	.244

Table 3. Summary Statistics of Government Feeling Thermometers

Level of Government	*Mean*	*Standard Deviation*
Federal	54.372	24.547
State	56.978	23.886
City	55.496	24.516

Table 4. Correlations Between the Support for the Three Levels of Government

	Federal	*State*	*City*
Federal		.637	.585
State	540		.735
City	541	537	

NOTE: Figures above the diagonal are Pearson *r*'s. Figures below the diagonal are the *N*'s for that combination of variables.

is supported by findings presented below, which show a differential impact of television on the various levels of government.

Findings

Data presented in Table 5 indicate a negative relationship between the amount of television watching and support for all levels of government. This relationship is maintained when income, race, and political philosophy are controlled for. Income and race were selected as controls because the literature indicates these are related to support for government.[2] Political philosophy was added on the assumption that this may affect both watching behavior and governmental support, thereby produicing spurious results. Political philosophy was operationalized as the self-classification of the respondent from strongly conservative to strongly liberal.

Further support for the negative relationship is provided in Table 6. In this table the results of a multiple regression analysis of the relationships between support for the three levels of government and television watching and other child and parent demographics are

Table 5. Relationship Between Number of Hours of TV Watched per Day and Feeling for Various Levels of Government

		Controlling For:		
Level of Government	*Simple R*	*Income*	*Race*	*Political Philosophy*
Federal	−.283	−.287*	−.284*	−.288*
State	−.183	−.165*	−.166*	−.167*
City	−.213	−.187*	−.187*	−.189*

Significance of relationship with controls:
* $p \leq .001$.

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[2] Since 1972 the Advisory Commission on Intergovernmental Relations has contracted with Opinion Research Corporation of Princeton, New Jersey, to determine public opinion on the question: "From which level of government do you feel you get the most for your money—federal, state, or local?" This rough measure of political support has generally found race and income particularly associated with feelings toward the various levels. See ACIR (1978).

Table 6. Relationship Between Feeling Thermometers for Three Levels of Government and Various Independent Variables

	Multiple R	*R Square*	*RSQ Change*	*Simple R*
Federal government				
Forced first step				
Income	.029	.001	.001	−.028
Age and youth I	.069	.005	.004	.060
Sex	.074	.005	.001	−.036
Race	.088	.008	.002	−.043
How interested in politics?	.098	.010	.002	−.035
Political & social views	.101	.010	.000	−.021
Stepwise				
Hours per day TV	.315	.098	.089	−.303
Political & social views	.324	.105	.006	.074
How interested in politics?	.324	.105	.000	−.034
State government				
Forced first step				
Income	.015	.000	.000	.015
Age and youth I	.045	.002	.002	.044
Race	.052	.003	.001	−.032
How interested in politics?	.128	.016	.013	−.113
Political & social views	.134	.018	.002	.034
Stepwise				
Hours per day TV	.231	.053	.035	−.188
Political & social views	.246	.060	.007	.070
How interested in politics?	.249	.062	.002	−.067
City government				
Forced first step				
Income	.053	.003	.003	.053
Age and youth I	.090	.008	.005	.078
Sex	.096	.009	.001	.027
Race	.106	.011	.002	−.059
How interested in politics?	.133	.018	.006	−.095
Political & social views	.134	.018	.000	.017
Stepwise				
Hours per day TV	.234	.055	.037	−.201
Political & social views	.242	.059	.004	.054
How interested in politics?	.250	.062	.004	−.087

shown. The table includes variables concerning the political interest and philosophy of parents. The data were gathered at the same time as the child interview. One parent, randomly selected, was asked to complete a self-administered questionnaire while the teenager was being interviewed. In Table 6 we have used a combination of hierarchical and stepwise regression. Entered first into the regression equation are those variables which are logically and/or temporally prior. These include: age of the adolescent, family income, race, sex, political philosophy of the parent, and political interest of the parent. These variables are simultaneously forced into the equation as the first step. Subsequently, hours of television watching, the teenager's political philosophy, and the teenager's interest in politics are entered stepwise. In this manner, we were able to assess the impact of television over and above the prior variables. In each instance the prior variables explain less than 2 percent of the variance. Hours of television viewing, however, adds a comparatively substantial amount of explained variance: i.e., 8.9 percent for federal government, 3.5 percent for state government, and 3.7 percent for city government.

In Table 7 we have attempted to specify the relationship between TV watching and support for government by looking at the impact of

Table 7. Relationship Between Watching Various Program Types and Feeling for Various Levels of Government

Level of Government	*Simple R*	*Controlling for Income, Race, & Political Philosophy*
Adult entertainment		
Federal	−.207	−.178**
State	−.104	−.099*
City	−.127	−.112**
Juvenile entertainment		
Federal	.073	.098*
State	.161	.150**
City	.122	.116**
Cartoons		
Federal	−.192	−.134**
State	−.085	−.080*
City	−.120	−.111**
News		
Federal	−.183	−.161**
State	−.110	−.098*
City	−.134	−.124**
Public affairs		
Federal	−.018	−.032
State	.003	−.022
City	−.026	−.060
Police shows		
Federal	.007	.026
State	.077	.077
City	−.000	.015

Significance of relationships with controls:
* = $p \leq .05$.
** = $p \leq .01$.

the six program types. The program types can be classified as to whether they have a positive, negative, or no relationship with support for government. Public affairs and police shows fall into the no-impact group. Adult entertainment, news shows and cartoons are negatively related to support. Juvenile entertainment programs, on the other hand, are positively related. The relationships are maintained when income, race, and political philosophy are controlled for.

These are very curious findings which are not subject to easy interpretation. One is left with an unclear choice between whether these are types of programs teenagers with preexisting attitudes watch, or whether there is something in these programs that directly or indirectly influence teenagers' political attitudes. If it is the latter, the data suggest that entertainment programs as well as news programs are providing significant but varying stimuli that condition feelings toward government. Explication of this thesis would require extensive content analysis.

We also examined the relationship of individual programs within a scale to government support. In the case of adult entertainment, cartoons, juvenile entertainment, and public affairs, we found no differences between the scales and the individual programs either in sign or magnitude of effect. However, in the police and news categories we did find variation. The police index masked the differential impact that individual programs have. For example, while "Police Story," "Kojak," and "Police Woman" had a positive relationship with support for government, "Starsky and Hutch" and "Hawaii Five-O" had a negative association. Again, content analysis would be required to interpret this finding.

Table 8. Relationship Between Specific News Shows and Support for Government, Controlling for Income, Race, and Political Philosophy

News Show	*Level of Government*	*Simple R*	*Controlling for: Income, Race, and Political Philosophy*
5:30 P.M. National	Federal	.032	.030
	State	−.029	−.031
	City	−.083	−.084*
6:00 P.M. Local	Federal	−.092	−.097*
	State	−.074	−.076
	City	−.073	−.075
10:00 P.M. Local	Federal	−.191	−.210**
	State	−.137	−.140**
	City	−.147	−.148**

Significance of Relationships with Controls:
$^{*} p \leq .05$.
$^{**} p \leq .05$.

Among the news shows, the 10:00 P.M. locally produced news has by far the largest negative relationship with support for government (see Table 8). The nationally produced news seems to have little or no relationship to support for government, and the local 6:00 P.M. news is related (negatively) only to support for the federal government. These findings are maintained with control variables (Table 8). One possible explanation for the strong correlations between the locally produced 10:00 P.M. news and the negative feelings toward government may be that these programs (there are three) reflect the general antigovernment, particularly antifederal government, climate of opinion in the metropolitan area.[3] The locally produced 6:00 P.M. news may reflect the same bias but perhaps has less general influence on support for government because it directly follows the national network news and is therefore usually confined to local news stories. The 10:00 P.M. news, on the other hand, gives local commentators an opportunity to report on international and national developments as well as events in Arizona. These findings suggest that how local stations report national and international news is a key factor accounting for affective political orientations, and for variations in such orientations from one community to another.

Discussion and Conclusions

The focus of this study has been on the relationship between TV viewing habits of adolescents and their affective orientations toward government. Our data suggest that these habits do not explain a great deal of the variance in support. They do, however, explain more of the variance than a number of other presumably important variables, such as race, family income, and political philosophy. Identification of other independent variables that are associated with feelings toward government awaits further research. Those following this line of inquiry are likely to find it useful to investigate the effects of other socializing agents such as family, peer group, and the school. In regard to the mass media, researchers might explore the possibility that exposure to newspapers is more important than exposure to television in regard not only to informing adolescents and adults about government, but also in shaping affective orientations (Clarke and Fredin, 1978). The effects of exposure to media other than television have not been measured in this study, but should be included in future research. More broadly, future researchers may find that the amount of information in general is related to negative attitudes toward government.

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[3] These findings about public opinion in Arizona have shown up in a number of studies. One of the most recent of these is by Berman and Merrill (1979).

Though the causal ordering is unclear in this study, future researchers should test the hypothesis that the content of news programs causes or contributes to negative feelings toward government. As indicated above, however, all news programs may not have the same impact. Our analysis suggests that if TV news does produce political malaise in young adults, the chief offenders may be locally prepared newscasts rather than network presentations. Entertainment programs are perhaps best considered as what people with particular feelings about government happen to watch rather than as contributors to these attitudes. On the other hand, one might also speculate that the content of certain entertainment programs produces stimuli which have psychological effects on the viewers, e.g., in shaping their views of human nature, which, in turn, are related to certain affective political orientations. Further studies are needed in these areas which employ panel techniques and content analysis.

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Images of Social Groups: Categorical or Qualified?

MARY R. JACKMAN AND MARY SCHEUER SENTER

THE WAY people assign personality traits to social groups has been of central concern to students of racial prejudice, social class ideology, and sex roles. Images of blacks and whites, various social classes, and women and men reflect the cognitive meaning of group labels, thus shaping people's expectations about individual group members. Such expectations, in turn, provide the cognitive foundation for social policies and practices that affect the life chances of individual group members and the pattern of relations between groups.

Most serious in its implications is the outright categorical description of a group. A person who thinks that *all* women are emotional, or that *no* blacks are dependable, or that *all* poor people are lazy is interpreting group membership in the most constraining way possible. Such categorical, unqualified perceptions carry no expectation of individual variation within groups. Nonetheless, such perceptions are

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Abstract This paper makes a direct empirical assessment of the way Americans go about describing social groups in three important intergroup contexts—race, gender, and social class. Results from a national survey indicate that when respondents are given the opportunity to express themselves in a relatively unconstrained format, qualified images of groups generally prevail over categorical descriptions. Further, the amount and pattern of categorical thinking vary considerably across the three intergroup contexts, reflecting the different kinds of group images that underly race, gender, and social class relations.

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thought to be pervasive and widespread (Katz and Braly, 1947; Centers, 1951; Ehrlich, 1962, 1973:32; Williams, 1964:36, 41; Karlins et al., 1969; Eldridge, 1979:22–27), and their analysis has been central to the study of intergroup beliefs and stereotypes. Indeed, most definitions of a stereotype include categorical thinking as a critical element (Fishman, 1956; Richter, 1956; Vinacke, 1957; Allport, 1958; Secord, 1959; Koenig and King, 1964; Williams, 1964; Campbell, 1967; Harding et al., 1969; Tajfel, 1969; Cauthen et al., 1971; Brigham, 1971; Mackie, 1973).

While the categorical description of groups has been a central concern of past research, standard measures have assumed rather than demonstrated its existence. Analysts have constrained respondents to express their beliefs about group traits in categorical terms, and have then inferred that categorical thinking is endemic to intergroup perceptions. In addition, most research on trait attribution to social groups has relied on select subsamples (generally college students), so that we know relatively little about the nature of trait attribution among a cross-section of the general public.

In this study, we report on a new measure of beliefs about group traits that was administered in a national probability survey of the United States. A more sensitive reflection than past measures of how personality traits are assigned to social groups, our measure is applied to the images of race, gender, and social class groups held by blacks and whites, women and men, and people from four subjectively defined social classes, respectively. The results of our analysis belie the common conclusion that categorical images of social groups are pervasive and widespread. Instead, they yield useful and suggestive data on the varied extent to which different social groups are described in categorical or qualified terms.

Categorical Thinking: Central Issues

Many analysts consider the tendency to simplify and classify the world as fundamental to perception as well as a functional coping mechanism for bringing some order to the confusion of reality (Lippman, 1922; Allport, 1958; Tajfel, 1969; Ehrlich, 1973:38). In the context of intergroup beliefs, this process is believed to become exaggerated and emotionally invested. The categorical perception of groups "provides the mold which gives shape to intergroup attitudes" (Tajfel, 1969:91). Stereotype assignments become "the language of prejudice" (Ehrlich, 1973:21). The categorical attribution of traits to social groups is regarded as invidious for two reasons.

One line of reasoning stresses that any perception that unequivocally lumps all the members of a group into one unvaried category is intrinsically invidious because it credits group membership with an overwhelming role in determining individual personality characteristics, and because it provides the perfect grounding for discriminatory policies and practices. Most important, however, the categorical description of a group represents a closed and insensitive perception that routinely pigeonholes group members and leaves the perceiver unreceptive to contrary evidence, which is either overlooked or dismissed as a mere "exception." Categorical descriptions of groups are thus seen as inherently "inaccurate" and irrational (Lippmann, 1922; Richter, 1956; Allport, 1958; Williams, 1964:36; Ehrlich, 1973; Mackie, 1973; Tajfel, 1969; 1978).

According to a second line of reasoning, the invidiousness of categorical images of groups stems from the unqualified attribution of *positive* traits to one's own group and *negative* qualities to other groups. Perceptions that reflect ethnocentrism and prejudice assert one group's monopoly of "good" traits and another group's monopoly of "bad" traits (Vinacke, 1957; Allport, 1958; Williams, 1964:40; Campbell, 1967; Harding, 1968; Tajfel, 1969; 1978; Eldridge, 1979:23–27).

These two approaches to categorical thinking need not be mutually exclusive, nor have they always been. In general, however, the two concerns have guided alternative analytic strategies. According to the first approach, the implicit irrationality and inaccuracy of undifferentiated perceptions make them more probable when the object is a group other than one's own. Empirical studies in this vein have measured people's perceptions of groups to which they do not belong (generally "minority" groups) and have been concerned about the attribution of both positive and negative traits.[1] The second approach, however, does not imply that groups other than one's own are any more likely to be described categorically. Measures reflecting this approach thus seek people's assignment of *differently valued* personality traits to their own and other groups.

From these concerns, two standard measures of beliefs about group traits have developed, one using *agree-disagree categorical statements*, and the other using a *stereotype checklist*. The former, prevalent in cross-sectional surveys, presents respondents with categorical statements about the trait attributes of a group (such as "poor people are lazy," "blacks are musical"), and respondents can express agreement or disagreement with these statements (Adorno et al., 1950; Deutsch and Collins, 1951; Wilner et al., 1955; Marx, 1969; Selznick and Steinberg, 1969). The most frequently replicated research on trait attribution to groups, however, has used the stereotype checklist, usually administered to small samples of select subgroups (generally college undergraduates). This measure presents respondents with a long list of traits and instructs them to assign the traits to specific groups; the positive or negative values attached to the traits are often obtained from another group of respondents (Meenes, 1943; Katz and Braly, 1947; Gilbert, 1951; Sherriffs and McKee, 1957; Karlins et al., 1969; Broverman et al., 1972; Smedley and Bayton, 1978).

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[1] An extreme example of a belief item that reflects this perspective is found in Wilner et al. (1955:62): "There may be a few exceptions, but in general, Negroes are pretty much alike." A similar item is found in the Ethnocentrism scale of Adorno et al. (1950).

These two standard measures share one important feature—they both constrain respondents to express themselves in categorical, all-or-none terms, thereby precluding the expression of qualified beliefs.[2] Because of this constraint, these measures cannot reflect the degree to which people do in fact think about groups in a categorical or qualified way. As early as 1954, Harding et al. pointed out that standard stereotype measures do not differentiate between respondents who are indeed ignoring individual differences and those who are merely making a statistical generalization (see also Hyman, 1969:10; Brigham, 1971). The interest of analysts in this specific issue has exacerbated the problem by encouraging interpretations that far outstrip the information yielded by these measures. Thus, it is commonly assumed that respondents who agree with the statement that "blacks are lazy" think that *all* blacks are lazy. Similarly, the very name of the "stereotype checklist" carries the clear assumption that, in requiring respondents to label groups with traits, the analyst has captured categorical thinking.

The categorical phrasing of the measures not only restricts the information they can yield, but it may also make them more susceptible to response bias effects. The blatant character of the task may cue some respondents (especially the well educated) to social desirability pressures, and make them unwilling to present their beliefs in an unfavorable light.[3] Meanwhile, other respondents with simpler cognitive styles (especially the poorly educated) may be trapped by the loaded and unbalanced construction of the measure into saying "yes" or into labeling groups with traits because these response options are "near enough."[4]

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[2] Different aspects of this problem have been addressed by Ehrlich (1964), Ehrlich and Rinehart (1965), Bayton et al. (1956), and Smedley and Bayton (1978). However, none of the procedures suggested in these studies addresses the issue of measuring directly respondents' perceptions of the internal homogeneity/heterogeneity of groups. Procedures used by Broverman et al. (1972) did allow respondents to make finer distinctions between men and women; unfortunately, these distinctions were ignored in the variables subsequently created.

[3] Some evidence of this is provided by the replications of the original Katz and Braly design among Princeton undergraduates. Gilbert (1951) and Karlins et al. (1969) report that many subjects protested the unreasonableness of making such simplistic generalizations.

As a consequence of the restricted measurement of beliefs about group traits, central issues underlying their analysis have not been addressed empirically. Fundamental questions about the way people perceive the trait attributes of social groups remain unanswered. First, and most important, we lack direct evidence on the *extent* to which people's images of social groups are categorical or qualified. Standard measures have been constructed in a way that reduces and simplifies (and possibly distorts) the potential variance in beliefs that is their prime concern. Second, we lack critical information on the *pattern* of categorical thinking. Is categorical thinking more evident when people are describing groups other than their own, or do people tend to describe their own group in positive categorical terms and other groups in negative categorical terms? In other words, are categorical descriptions used to differentiate the homogeneity of another group from the individual variance within one's own group ("*they* are all alike"), or to maximize the difference between the bad qualities of the other group and the good qualities of one's own group ("they are all bad, we are all good")? Without information on the pattern of categorical perceptions, we cannot assess whether those perceptions have intrinsic significance, or are significant because the traits ascribed to one group are valued differently from those attributed to another group.

Data Source and Measures

The data reported in this paper are part of a larger study of intergroup attitudes and group consciousness, and were gathered from a probability sample of adults aged 18 and over residing in households in the 48 contiguous United States. Personal interviews with 1,914 respondents were conducted by the Survey Research Center of the University of Michigan during the fall of 1975.[5]

Membership in race and gender groups was determined by interviewer observation. For race, interviewers reported whether respondents were white, black, or from one of a number of other racial-ethnic groups. These other racial-ethnic groups are included in the base *N* in analyses of beliefs about gender and class groups, but the analysis of beliefs about race groups includes only respondents who are either black or white.[6] Social class membership was determined by responses to the following class identification question, which was asked early in the interview: "People talk about social classes such as the poor, the working class, the middle class, the upper-middle class, and the upper class. Which of these classes would you say you belong to?"

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[4] Ehrlich has argued that "the statement 'Atheists are cynical' may be correctly transliterated 'All atheists are cynical' " (1973:21). However (and apart from the difference between *acquiescing* to such a statement and spontaneously *making* it), this argument ignores differing cognitive styles. Some respondents (especially the poorly educated) are less wary of simple statements and therefore express themselves less precisely than others (Campbell et al., 1960; Jackman, 1973).

[5] The response rate was just under 70 percent, which is within the normal range for national surveys conducted by the Survey Research Center in recent years.

The validity and subjective meaning of this measure are discussed elsewhere (Jackman, 1979).[7] The percentage identifying with each of the social classes is as follows: poor, 7.6 percent; working class, 36.6 percent; middle class, 43.3 percent; upper-middle class, 8.2 percent; upper class, 1.0 percent. Only 3.5 percent of the respondents were unable or unwilling to place themselves in a class, or gave other responses. Note that because only 19 respondents identified with the upper class, the *N* for this group is too small to yield reliable inferences. Hence, although responses of the upper class identifiers are presented in the tables, they are not discussed. Of course, the beliefs of respondents from other classes *about* the upper class can be analyzed.

The beliefs of and about these race, gender, and social class groups were measured. Our measure of trait attribution was designed to maximize information on the degree to which people describe their own and other social groups in categorical or qualified terms, while minimizing social desirability and other response set pressures. Supplemental information was gathered on the evaluative connotations of the traits that people were asked to assign to groups.

The items on perception of group traits were contained in a self-administered booklet, which the interviewer introduced as follows:

> There are many groups in America and people have different opinions about what these groups are like. This booklet contains a list of some of the ways groups are described. In each case, you are asked how many people in various groups you would say are like this. The more people you think are like this, the *higher* the number you should choose from the scale at the top of

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[6] Every effort was made to match the race of interviewer and respondent. In addition, the items that would be most sensitive to interviewer effects were self-administered. A reanalysis of all the data reported in this paper, excluding the 36 blacks interviewed by whites and the 6 whites interviewed by blacks, does not alter the results.

[7] The main advantage of a subjective measure of class membership over a measure based on an objective criterion such as educational attainment, occupational status, or income is that it allows us to treat class in broader terms than would be encompassed by any single objective criterion.

the page—the fewer people you think are like this, the *lower* the number you should choose.

This doesn't need to take much time. We're just interested in your first reaction of these questions.

There were 32 questions of the following form in the booklet: "How many (*group*) would you say are (*trait*)?" For example, "How many women would you say are emotional?" Questions were grouped by trait, with the question about the subordinate group directly preceding the question about the respective dominant group (a given question about blacks preceded the one about whites, and so on). Each trait was introduced by a subheading and a definition of the trait in parentheses. Respondents selected their responses from a nine-point scale extending from left to right and printed at the top of each page of the booklet, and they recorded responses in the box next to each question.[8] The lefthand pole of the scale was labeled 0 (*none*), and the righthand pole was labeled 8 (*all*). The intervals between were marked 1 to 7; no labels were attached to them. Attention was drawn to the midpoint of the scale by short vertical lines above and below the 4. Respondents were also provided explicitly with a "don't know" response option: to the right of the scale was written "X = *don't know*."

The fact that the trait booklet is self-administered should maximize the respondent's sense of privacy and reduce social pressures, even though it is embedded in a face-to-face interview schedule.[9] The construction of the items also presents no obvious source of bias, since a variety of response options (including "don't know") are presented in an equally balanced way.

We selected traits for the items on the basis of three criteria: their prominence in the literature on presumed race, gender, and social class characteristics; their policy significance; and their ready comprehension and common interpretation by a cross-section of the population that includes people with widely varying levels of education and life experiences. In this way, we selected the following traits: for race, *intelligent* (or bright), *lazy* (or *not* hard-working), and *dependable* (or reliable); for gender, *intelligent*, *emotional* (or quick to show feelings), and *talkative* (or talk a lot); for class, *intelligent*, *lazy*,

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[8] Brigham (1971) has suggested that respondents be asked to indicate what *percentage* of a group they think has some trait. However, we found in a pretest that this format elicited a large number of response-set answers where respondents repeated the same percentage throughout the booklet.

[9] To increase the respondents' sense of privacy and to reduce social pressures further, interviewers were instructed to keep busy with other editing tasks while the respondent was completing the booklet, and to put the booklet into an envelope as soon as the respondent was finished with it.

selfish (or concerned only with one's own problems), and *thrifty* (or careful with money).[10]

The administration of the trait attribution booklet went very smoothly. Of the 1,914 people in the sample, only 42 (or 2.2 percent) did not answer the booklet at all. The mean time spent on the booklet was 6.7 minutes; the median was 5 minutes, and the range was 1 to 36 minutes. Response set problems are not apparent. In a check for blatant response set we counted the number of times each numerical response was repeated throughout the booklet. The middle category on the scale (the 4's) was used most often; however, even here, only 5 respondents used this response exclusively, and only 68 respondents used this response 21 times or more over the 32 questions. The "don't know" response was chosen for all 32 items in the booklet by only 20 respondents; 69 respondents gave this response 21 or more times. No other points on the scale were used more than 23 times by any respondent. (We may assume that these counts constitute an upper-bound estimate of this kind of response set since we cannot separate out content-free repetition from "true" responses.)

In addition to the trait attributions themselves, we gathered data on the evaluative connotations of the traits involved, with an independent measure of the respondent's evaluation of each of the traits used in the booklet. This information is critical to the assessment and interpretation of the pattern of categorical thinking about social groups. The items on the evaluative overlay of the traits were administered 34 pages after the booklet itself in the interview schedule.

> I am going to read a list of things people use to describe each other. For each one, I am going to ask how much you generally like or dislike people like this. Here is a scale that ranges from 1 for "dislike very much" to 9 for "like very much." For each characteristic I read, please tell me the number that comes closest to how you feel.
>
> How much do you like or dislike *lazy* people?

The question was repeated for the remaining six traits used in the trait booklet. The poles of the scale that was shown to respondents were labeled as described above, and the midpoint of the scale (5) was labeled "neither dislike nor like." The mean evaluations of the traits vary considerably, with dependable people being liked the most and selfish people being disliked the most. The mean scores (and standard deviations) for each of the evaluation items are as follows: dependable, 8.20 (1.16); intelligent, 7.24 (1.56); thrifty, 6.84 (1.69); talkative,

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[10] Other traits were pretested, but they proved unsatisfactory, either because of poor respondent comprehension (e.g., logical for gender) or because they seemed to produce discomfort/evasiveness (e.g., musical for race).

5.46 (1.84); emotional, 4.71 (1.62); lazy, 2.31 (1.57); and selfish, 2.23 (1.49). The evaluation of the traits does not vary systematically by group or by responses to the trait attribution items.

Analysis

There are three, successively broader ways that we may measure categorical thinking, and our analysis makes use of all three. The first defines it strictly in terms of the extreme responses at either end of the scale, that is, the responses that "all" or "none" of the members of a group have some trait.[11] This definition is closely in accord with the notion that there is an important qualitative distinction between the sweeping perception of *no variance* within a group and the perception of *any amount* of variance, no matter how limited. The second measure also makes a qualitative distinction between categorical and noncategorical thinking, but it broadens the definition of the former to include responses that describe a group in "almost all" or "almost none" terms (that is, the 7's and 1's on our scale). This less restrictive definition concedes that some people who are unwilling to describe a group in absolutely categorical terms may nevertheless recognize such restricted variance in the group that the implications are no different from an absolutely categorical response. Group members who do not fit the group's stereotype are characterized by such people as "exceptions" that leave unchallenged their overall perception of the group (Allport, 1958). Our third approach to the assessment of categorical thinking couches it in more continuous terms: we become concerned with the extent to which people's descriptions of groups are stated in moderate or extreme language. Here, we inspect people's use of the entire scale to determine the degree of internal variance people recognize in different social groups.

Tables 1, 2, and 3 present data for race, gender, and social class, respectively. Tables 1 and 2 report the percentage distributions and mean scores for the trait items, by group, while Table 3 reports only the tails of the distributions and the mean scores, owing to space limitations. In reading the tables, note that for each trait item (e.g., "How many blacks would you say are intelligent?"), the first column records the responses of one group (blacks), and the second column records the responses of the other group (whites).

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[11] It is important to remember that both *inclusive* and *exclusive* categorical descriptions are of interest. With positively valued traits, a categorically exclusive description amounts to an unequivocal, negative statement (e.g., "No blacks are dependable" is equivalent to "All blacks are undependable"); with negatively valued traits, a categorically exclusive description amounts to an unequivocal, positive statement (e.g., "No poor people are selfish" implies "All poor people are unselfish").

Table 1. Percentage Distributions and Means for Race Trait Items, for Blacks and Whites

Trait Item Score	*Intelligent*				*Dependable*				*Lazy*			
	Blacks Intelligent		*Whites Intelligent*		*Blacks Dependable*		*Whites Dependable*		*Blacks Lazy*		*Whites Lazy*	
	Blacks	*Whites*	*Blacks*	*Whites*	*Blacks*	*Whites*	*Blacks*	*Whites*	*Blacks*	*Whites*	*Blacks*	*Whites*
None	0.0%	0.5%	0.5%	0.0%	0.5%	1.3%	1.1%	0.1%	1.6%	0.3%	0.0%	0.4%
1	0.0	1.4	1.1	0.0	0.0	3.2	2.6	0.1	1.1	1.4	2.1	1.8
2	0.5	7.0	0.5	0.7	3.2	9.6	2.1	1.1	8.0	6.8	5.3	9.7
3	1.6	16.2	2.7	1.8	6.8	15.6	7.9	3.9	14.4	13.5	10.2	16.7
4	18.3	33.9	18.2	23.5	25.3	35.4	21.6	32.6	32.6	31.0	29.4	39.5
5	10.8	14.2	10.2	22.2	15.8	12.1	15.8	21.4	13.4	12.0	15.0	13.2
6	28.5	11.2	26.2	28.0	20.5	9.1	21.1	25.2	8.0	12.3	11.2	7.0
7	21.0	2.9	21.4	12.5	8.9	2.4	7.4	7.4	6.4	7.6	9.6	2.1
All	9.7	1.6	8.0	3.3	7.9	0.8	7.4	2.3	2.7	3.9	2.7	0.4
Don't know	9.7	11.0	11.2	8.0	11.1	10.6	13.2	6.0	11.8	11.2	14.4	9.2
N[a]	186	1,594	187	1,598	190	1,601	190	1,605	187	1,596	187	1,595
$\bar{X}$[b]	5.85	4.17	5.69	5.37	5.12	3.89	4.98	5.03	4.22	4.48	4.58	3.91

[a] Base N excludes missing data.

[b] Means calculated with DK's excluded. Scale ranges from 0 to 8.

Table 2. Percentage Distributions and Means for Gender Trait Items, for Women and Men

Trait	*Emotional*				*Talkative*				*Intelligent*			
Item	*Women Emotional*		*Men Emotional*		*Women Talkative*		*Men Talkative*		*Women Intelligent*		*Men Intelligent*	
Score	*Women*	*Men*	*Women*	*Men*	*Women*	*Men*	*Women*	*Men*	*Women*	*Men*	*Women*	*Men*
None	0.1%	0.0%	0.6%	0.1%	0.2%	0.1%	0.5%	0.3%	0.1%	0.0%	0.1%	0.0%
1	0.1	0.3	1.2	1.2	0.2	0.3	0.5	0.5	0.2	0.0	0.1	0.0
2	0.6	1.2	4.2	5.0	0.7	1.4	2.7	2.8	0.8	0.6	0.5	0.3
3	1.7	2.2	11.0	10.6	2.5	3.5	6.7	10.6	1.4	3.8	1.8	2.1
4	11.2	11.5	31.3	31.9	20.7	24.0	36.2	40.6	22.7	26.0	21.6	25.1
5	10.4	10.2	20.9	22.4	14.0	12.7	18.5	20.0	20.9	19.6	17.4	20.0
6	24.3	24.4	15.5	15.0	23.4	24.8	15.2	14.0	29.1	28.7	29.3	30.9
7	29.6	31.2	6.3	5.4	18.2	16.5	8.4	5.6	13.0	11.8	16.8	13.1
All	17.8	14.5	3.7	3.7	17.3	13.8	7.9	2.9	4.5	4.0	5.3	3.3
Don't know	4.4	4.6	5.2	4.7	2.8	2.9	3.3	2.7	7.3	5.4	7.2	5.3
N^a	1,079	782	1,077	781	1,081	782	1,082	784	1,074	780	1,075	780
$\overline{X}^b$	6.25	6.15	4.63	4.62	5.84	5.64	4.94	4.59	5.42	5.30	5.55	5.39

[a] Base *N* excludes missing data.

[b] Means calculated with DK's excluded. Scale ranges from 0 to 8.

Table 3. Tails of Percentage Distributions and Mean Scores for Class Trait Items, for the Five Subjective Social Classes

Trait Item Score	Poor Intelligent					Working Intelligent					Middle Intelligent		
	Poor[a]	Work[b]	Mid[c]	UpMid[d]	Upper[e]	Poor	Work	Mid	UpMid	Upper	Poor	Work	Mid
None/1	4.4	5.3	5.3	7.7	16.7	1.5	0.4	0.2	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
All/7	14.0	7.1	4.8	2.5	0.0	27.4	14.1	8.3	5.2	5.6	28.7	17.4	15.4
Don't know	15.4	8.5	9.7	9.0	5.6	14.1	5.0	6.9	6.5	5.6	14.0	6.2	5.9
$\bar{x}^f$	4.64	3.96	3.68	3.55	3.35	5.53	5.09	4.70	4.40	4.53	5.79	5.49	5.37
	Poor Selfish					Working Selfish					Middle Selfish		
None/1	13.3	14.1	12.2	3.3	11.2	5.8	5.3	4.5	1.2	11.1	5.1	2.2	3.8
All/7	11.7	6.2	5.4	7.2	27.8	9.5	4.9	3.8	5.8	5.6	13.3	7.5	4.7
Don't know	12.5	10.9	12.3	17.0	22.2	14.7	8.1	9.9	13.6	22.2	16.2	10.1	9.6
$\bar{x}$	3.58	3.39	3.38	3.81	4.57	3.88	3.79	3.82	4.15	4.21	4.39	4.30	4.07
	Poor Thrifty					Working Thrifty					Middle Thrifty		
None/1	7.3	8.0	8.3	9.6	5.3	2.2	0.8	0.9	0.6	0.0	0.7	1.1	0.6
All/7	26.4	13.1	9.7	7.1	21.1	28.5	19.5	12.7	9.6	21.0	23.5	12.0	13.8
Don't know	9.6	5.6	6.4	8.3	21.1	8.8	2.2	4.3	7.1	5.3	11.8	2.9	3.8
$\bar{x}$	4.76	4.23	3.93	3.67	4.40	5.33	5.13	4.81	4.70	5.28	5.22	4.81	4.98
	Poor Lazy					Working Lazy					Middle Lazy		
None/1	6.7	5.5	3.8	3.2	11.1	11.8	9.5	5.6	1.9	5.6	6.7	6.8	5.3
All/7	11.1	13.3	9.0	13.5	11.2	9.5	5.8	1.1	0.6	0.0	6.6	3.6	3.0
Don't know	14.8	7.0	8.1	11.0	11.1	16.2	4.5	5.9	9.0	5.6	20.0	6.3	5.7
$\bar{x}$	4.03	4.29	4.15	4.43	4.44	3.75	3.57	3.57	3.68	3.88	4.03	3.73	3.61

Table 3. *(Continued)*

Trait Item	*Middle Intelligent*		*Upper-Middle intelligent*					*Upper Intelligent*				
Score	*UpMid*	*Upper*	*Poor*	*Work*	*Mid*	*UpMid*	*Upper*	*Poor*	*Work*	*Mid*	*UpMid*	*Upper*
None/1	0.0	0.0	0.7	0.2	0.1	0.6	0.0	1.4	0.5	0.0	0.6	0.0
All/7	12.3	22.2	45.6	38.2	31.2	27.2	33.4	50.0	50.1	46.1	42.9	55.6
Don't know	5.8	5.6	12.7	7.0	5.5	5.2	5.6	13.2	8.5	6.8	6.5	5.6
$\bar{x}_f$	5.26	5.23	6.11	6.06	5.92	5.86	6.06	6.25	6.37	6.26	6.17	6.47
	Middle Selfish		*Upper-Middle Selfish*					*Upper Selfish*				
None/1	0.6	11.1	6.6	2.4	2.9	0.6	5.6	8.1	3.0	3.1	1.2	11.2
All/7	8.4	5.6	23.0	16.2	10.3	13.6	11.1	26.7	32.5	21.8	22.7	16.7
Don't know	11.7	22.2	17.0	10.3	10.1	11.7	22.2	18.5	10.6	11.2	13.0	22.2
$\bar{x}$	4.44	4.14	4.80	4.90	4.56	4.68	4.50	4.99	5.40	4.91	4.95	4.50
	Middle Thrifty		*Upper-Middle Thrifty*					*Upper Thrifty*				
None/1	0.0	0.0	2.2	3.3	3.1	0.6	0.0	10.9	11.2	9.5	7.7	0.0
All/7	9.0	21.1	30.9	18.1	15.4	18.5	31.6	37.2	27.1	23.8	19.9	31.6
Don't know	7.1	5.3	16.2	5.7	5.5	7.1	5.3	17.5	7.6	6.6	8.3	5.3
$\bar{x}$	4.83	5.33	5.29	4.71	4.63	4.90	5.05	5.23	4.66	4.43	4.55	5.33
	Middle Lazy		*Upper-Middle Lazy*					*Upper Lazy*				
None/1	3.2	5.6	8.9	7.7	5.5	8.4	5.6	9.0	10.1	10.2	11.7	11.8
All/7	1.3	0.0	8.9	8.1	5.7	3.9	5.6	16.5	13.2	10.2	7.1	0.0
Don't know	8.4	5.6	19.3	8.4	8.4	9.1	5.6	20.9	10.0	8.9	10.4	5.9
$\bar{x}$	3.58	3.76	4.05	3.92	3.73	3.46	3.65	4.32	4.05	3.84	3.62	3.50

[a] Poor *N* ranges from 134 to 137.

[b] Working class *N* ranges from 678 to 683.

[c] Middle class *N* ranges from 805 to 815.

[d] Upper-middle class *N* ranges from 153 to 156.

[e] Upper class *N* ranges from 17 to 19.

[f] Means calculated with DK's excluded. Scale ranges from 0 to 8.

RACE

Few blacks or whites describe either their own or the other racial group in categorical terms: the recognition of variation within the two groups is considerably more prevalent. Further, to the extent that there is any categorical thinking in black-white relations, it shows little evidence of either of the patterns that have disturbed past investigators. It is the subordinate group that is more likely to have categorical perceptions,[12] and blacks are about equally likely to have such perceptions of either their own or the dominant group. Whites are more likely to describe the two groups differentially in a self-flattering way, but they are less likely to rely on categorical descriptions of either group.

Fewer than 10 percent of the blacks or 4 percent of the whites state that *all* the members of either racial group possess any trait (and virtually no blacks or whites absolutely deny the presence of a trait in either racial group). In fact, both blacks and whites are somewhat more likely to express uncertainty about how much either racial group is characterized by a trait than to describe either group in absolutely categorical terms.[13] If categorical attributions are defined more broadly to include the responses that almost all the members of a group have a trait, the pattern is not seriously altered. About 30 percent of blacks attribute the trait *intelligent* to all or almost all blacks and whites, but only between 9 and 17 percent attribute the traits *dependable* or *lazy* to either group in such a fashion. Whites are again less likely than blacks to attribute traits sweepingly to either racial group, but they have a pattern of making sweeping attributions of the positive traits more frequently to their own group and the negative trait more frequently to blacks.

Examination of the overall pattern of responses confirms these observations. Blacks describe both groups in parallel fashion, with most blacks attributing the trait *intelligent* to more than half, *dependable* to at least half, and *lazy* to between just under and just over half of both groups. Whites essentially agree with blacks about the extent to which whites are endowed with the positive traits and blacks with the negative trait (even though they are less likely to make categorical attributions), but they attribute the positive traits less generously to blacks and the negative trait more equivocally to whites.

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[12] This and all subsequent inferences are based on the size of the percentage differences between groups. Because of the large sample N, even substantively trivial differences can attain statistical significance (which makes the latter a weak test criterion).

[13] Uncertainty about how to describe a group might be seen as diametrically opposed to the categorical description of a group. Indeed, certainty is often included in definitions of a stereotype (Lippmann, 1922; Richter, 1956; Hardening et al., 1969).

GENDER

The gender context is marked by the relative frequency with which categorical images of women are held. The manner in which the sexes are described does not conform, however, to either of the patterns of categorical thinking that have been broached in the literature. Women as well as men express the belief that there is more variation among men than among women in the "female" traits *emotional* and *talkative*. Further, these traits have an evaluative overlay that is neither sharply negative nor positive, but which ranges from mild negative through neutral to mild positive.

The trait *intelligent* elicits few categorical descriptions of either sex, but the traits *emotional* and *talkative* are attributed to all women by about one in six respondents. If one includes the 7's on the scale, one finds that about one-sixth to one-fifth of the respondents think that all or almost all men and women are intelligent, but about one-third of both sexes believe that all or almost all women are talkative, and almost as many as half of both sexes make such sweeping statements about the number of women who are emotional. Consistent with these results is the low amount of uncertainty that is expressed when people are asked to describe the sexes.

Turning to the overall distribution of responses, one finds that between half and three-quarters of both sexes are commonly believed to be intelligent, but that more women than men are characterized as emotional and talkative. Most people of either sex believe that well over half of women are talkative and at least three-quarters of women are emotional. Both sexes agree that there is considerably more variation among men in those two traits, with most of these responses bunched in the central portion of the scale.

SOCIAL CLASS

Perhaps the most distinguishing feature of the class context is that the two highest social classes are described in categorical terms relatively frequently. The upper class is described categorically about as often as are women, with the upper-middle class not far behind. While categorical attributions are generally more prevalent than categorical denials, the class context is unique in that the latter are made by more than a handful of people. Thus, there is somewhat less consensus than there is in descriptions of women about the *way* in which the upper and upper-middle classes are homogeneous.

Again, there is little support for either of the patterns of categorical thinking alluded to in the literature. Instead, we find a weaker version of the pattern found in the race context. Poor people are somewhat more likely than people from other classes to attribute traits categorically to *all* classes (including their own), especially positive traits. As with blacks' images of blacks and whites, poor people's categorical perceptions of classes appear to be part of an attempt to equalize the classes. As with whites' perceptions of the race groups, people from higher classes are more likely to draw class distinctions but less likely to frame categorical images of the classes.

All or almost all upper class people are thought to be intelligent by as many as about half of the poor, to be thrifty by over one-third of the poor, to be selfish by about one-quarter of the poor, and to be lazy by about one-sixth of the poor.[14] The proportion of the poor making such sweeping attributions to the upper-middle class is only somewhat lower. People from other social classes are almost as likely as the poor to attribute traits to all or almost all of the upper class,[15] but considerably less likely to make such sweeping attributions to the upper-middle class. A considerably smaller proportion of people from any class perceive the other three classes in categorical terms, although the poor remain more likely than others to do so. The greater tendency of the poor to make categorical trait attributions is tempered by their considerably higher expression of uncertainty. When asked to describe any class, between about one-tenth and one-fifth of the poor say "don't know," whereas people from other classes give this response with approximately the same frequency as in the race context. Turning to the categorical denials, we find that about one-tenth of the poor think that no or almost no upper class people are thrifty, selfish, or lazy. Such descriptions are not restricted to the upper class, nor are the poor systematically more likely to use them.

It is only between the poor and other classes that one finds systematic disagreements in the typical images held of the classes.[16] These disagreements should be seen against the backdrop of the overall ranking of the classes on the four traits. In general, the proportion of intelligent people (positive value) and selfish people (negative value) is thought to increase incrementally from the poor through to the upper class. The poor are generally thought to have the highest proportion of lazy people (negative value) and the lowest proportion of thrifty people (positive value), with the *upper* class ranked next on both the latter traits, and with the other three classes ranked fairly indistinguishably from one another.[17]

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[14] For purposes of simplicity, discussion here is based on our second measure of categorical thinking. As with race and gender, "pure" categorical thinking is generally less prevalent than "almost all" or "almost none" statements, but the pattern of results is not altered by separate consideration of "all" or "none" descriptions.

[15] In fact, people from all classes are about equally likely to attribute the two traits *intelligent* and *selfish* to the upper class.

[16] For purposes of simplicity, we restrict discussion here to means rather than percentage ranges.

The pattern of between-class disagreements about class images is a weaker version of the pattern of disagreement between blacks and whites. Respondents from all classes typically think that the proportion of selfish people in each class gradually increases from fewer than half of the poor to almost two-thirds of the upper class. However, there is some tendency for the poor to think that there are fewer lazy people among the poor and more lazy people in the other classes than do other respondents; these disagreements are never large (all the mean scores hover around the middle of the scale), but they are most pronounced in describing the upper class. In addition, the poor typically think that there are more intelligent and more thrifty people in all of the social classes than do other respondents. With these two positively valued traits, the between-class disagreements tend to be somewhat larger, and they become further pronounced in descriptions of the poor. Respondents from all classes typically think that over three-quarters of the upper class are intelligent, but while the poor think that well over half of their own class is intelligent, other respondents typically believe that this trait characterizes fewer than half of the poor. Respondents from the poor typically think that about two-thirds of each of the other classes and well over half of their own class are thrifty, while respondents from the other classes are typically less likely to attribute this trait to any class (especially to classes other than their own).

Summary and Conclusions

In this paper we have made a direct empirical assessment of the way Americans go about describing social groups in three important intergroup contexts—race, gender, and social class. Our results from a national survey indicate that several presumptions that have been made about this phenomenon are without support. First, when respondents are given the opportunity to express themselves in a relatively unconstrained format, qualified images of groups generally prevail over categorical descriptions. Second, the pattern of categorical images does not conform to either of the patterns that have traditionally been regarded as cause for social concern. There is no systematic tendency for people to see their own group as heterogeneous and other groups as homogeneous. Nor is there a pattern of

[17] There is a small but consistent tendency for members of the working, middle, and upper-middle classes to have self-flattering perceptions of their own class as the most thrifty and the least lazy.

people giving their own group a monopoly of positive qualities and other groups a monopoly of negative qualities. The only pattern that is evident in more than one intergroup situation is for the subordinate group (blacks, and to a lesser extent poor people) to make categorical attributions of positive traits to both their own and the other group(s) more frequently, in an apparent attempt to equalize the groups. At the same time, to the extent that people seek to perceive their own group in a flattering light and the other group(s) in a negative light (whites and higher social classes), this is relatively unlikely to be done via categorical images.

On the other hand, our analyses suggest that not all groups are equally likely to be seen as internally heterogeneous, and this variance throws light on the character of intergroup relations in the three contexts of race, gender, and social class. The two groups that are most likely to be described in categorical terms are one subordinate group, women, and one dominant group, the upper class, with a third group, the upper-middle class, not too far behind. That the upper class and, to a lesser extent, the upper-middle class are seen as homogeneous by a relatively large proportion of people is, perhaps, not surprising. Both classes, but especially the upper class, constitute small, select, elite groups within which people clearly do not expect to find the same degree of heterogeneity as in the rest of the population.

That women should be seen as homogeneous, with more consensus than with any other group, is more disturbing. Not only do women make up about half of the population, but they comprise, demographically, socioeconomically, and politically, a cross section of the population. The gender context is also marked by a comparatively high level of intimacy between groups. That women are nevertheless seen as homogeneous in their personality traits by a relatively large proportion of both men and women suggests that gender relations are governed more heavily by restrictive norms of behavior than are either class or race relations. Even though the "female" traits *emotional* and *talkative* do not generally carry negative evaluative overtones, we cannot disregard the discriminatory implications of the categorical attribution of these "expressive" traits to a group that has traditionally been restricted to the nurturing role in social life.

Our analyses have two general implications. First, people's images of social groups appear to be more sophisticated than past standard measures have allowed. By constraining respondents to express themselves in categorical terms, past standard measures have oversimplified their perceptions. These measures have thus encouraged an overriding emphasis on a type of perception that is neither necessary nor sufficient to produce invidious group images. Important examples can be found in the class and especially the race context of dominant groups engaging in self-flattery without resorting to categorical imagery. Second, there is important variance across intergroup contexts both in the frequency of categorical group images and in their implications for relations between groups. In particular, we have identified one instance—perceptions of women by both sexes—where categorical images are not only more prevalent, but where they also have serious discriminatory implications.

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Citizen Perceptions of Channels for Urban Service Advocacy

ELAINE B. SHARP

WHAT happens when the urban resident confronts an urban service delivery problem, whether it be unsatisfactory police performance, a pothole in the street, or some other source of dissatisfaction with service delivery? A growing body of research suggests that citizen-initiated contact is a key response, and an important form of political assertion (Eisinger, 1972; Verba and Nie, 1972; Jacob, 1972; Friedmann, 1974; Jones et al., 1977). However, we know comparatively little about the extent to which citizens have a recognized channel for such contact, and even less about their choice of one channel over another.

This paper focuses upon citizen recognition of channels for advocating change in police service. Three contrasting orientations are considered: (1) the failure to recognize any specific channel for assertion; (2) identification of a citizen organization as one's advocacy

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Abstract Citizen recognition of channels for advocating change in police service is explored in the light of factors that might lead to recognition of a citizen organization rather than to a direct contact with a public official. Hypotheses to be tested used both individual and contextual factors that may influence whether an advocacy channel is recognized and what channel is recognized. Sense of political efficacy is used as an intervening variable. The analysis shows that the poor, the less educated, minorities, and residents of large cities are all less likely to recognize a channel for advocating police service change. The data provide limited support for a "compensatory" interpretation of the role of citizen organizations in urban service advocacy.

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agent; and (3) identification of some other form of advocacy contact. The data upon which this analysis is based show that very few individuals would contact the media, a lawyer, or other nongovernmental units or persons other than citizen organizations.[1] The two primary options recognized by citizens appear to be a citizen organization as a mediating agent in the contact process or direct contact with a government agency or official of some type. The purpose of this paper is to develop and test hypotheses to explain why some citizens recognize a channel for advocacy while others do not, and why some citizens recognize a citizen organization as their advocacy agent, whereas others perceive a direct contact with a public agency/official as their channel for advocacy.

Why should we be concerned with the reasons for recognition of citizen organizations as alternative channels of access to public officials for advocating urban service changes? Eisinger's (1972) analysis of actual contacting behavior suggests the importance of this issue, for he found that direct contact with public officials is a form of political assertion that is differentially exercised by different types of citizens. Blacks, for example, were much less likely than whites to make individual contact with government officials. This led Eisinger (1976: 123) to speculate that blacks and whites may pursue different channels for access to urban service decision makers—in particular, that political assertion through groups rather than individual contacts is more characteristic of blacks than whites. Verba and Nie (1972: 160–61) make similar observations about group ties as alternatives to citizen-initiated contacts with officials. Citizen organizations in this sense may serve an important compensating function in urban politics, insuring feedback from citizens who would not undertake contact on their own, or in situations which militate against individual contact with officials.

But citizen organizations will have this compensatory potential only to the extent that citizens recognize them as their go-betweens in advocacy contact situations. In order to explore the notion of citizen organizations as alternative channels of access, we need hypotheses to explain the conditions under which citizens recognize some channel for advocacy and the factors associated with the recognition of citizen organizations as one such channel. Note that the research here focuses on citizens' *recognition* of a channel for advocacy contact. It does not investigate actual or self-reported contacting behavior.

The hypotheses to be tested are based on the model presented in Figure 1. These hypotheses are elaborated more fully below. Here, it

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[1] Ninety-five percent of the contacts named by respondents involved either a public official/agency of some type or a citizen organization or its leader.

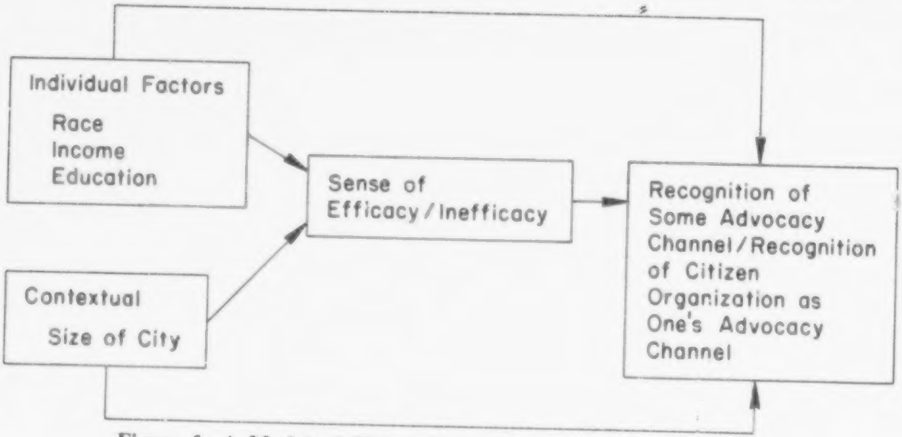
Individual Factors
Race
Income
Education
Contextual
Size of City
Sense of Efficacy / Inefficacy
Recognition of Some Advocacy Channel / Recognition of Citizen Organization as One's Advocacy Channel

Figure 1. A Model of Citizen Perception of Advocacy Channels

is most important to consider the role of political efficacy in the model. Figure 1 shows that efficacy may serve as the crucial intervening variable linking factors such as race, socioeconomic status, and city size with advocacy contact recognition. Political inefficacy is conceptualized as the belief that one's own action is unlikely to have an impact upon governmental affairs because government officials are not responsive.[2] Those who are low on efficacy are expected to be more likely to recognize no advocacy channel—a hypothesis consistent with research linking low efficacy with lower levels of traditional participation (Campbell et al., 1954, 1960; Finifter, 1970; Verba and Nie, 1972), and research indicating that those low on efficacy (or who feel powerless, in Seeman's terms) "tend to learn less of the control-relevant information available in the environment" (Seeman, 1972: 486). I also hypothesize that, to the extent that individuals do recognize an advocacy channel, citizen organizations will be more important for low efficacy than for high efficacy citizens. This is somewhat more problematic, given research linking group membership with higher levels of efficacy (Neal and Seeman, 1964; Almond and Verba, 1963).[3] The rationale is that given the alternatives of direct contact with officials and use of a citizen group as a go-between, the inefficacious are more likely than the efficacious to perceive the need for an intermediary to advocate change for them.

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[2] My definition of inefficacy parallels that offered by Miller et al. (1979: 67). There is an extensive literature on political efficacy, and a family of closely related concepts, including powerlessness, alienation and political trust. Some of the discussion in this literature revolves around differences between those who emphasize a personal control versus luck approach to efficacy or powerlessness, as for example Rotter's (1966) internal-external control scale, and those who conceptualize efficacy in a way that emphasizes perception of government responsiveness or political trust elements. Converse (1972) and Balch (1974) both note that the Miller et al. approach to political efficacy actually corresponds to perception of institutional responsiveness. These contrasting approaches are well summarized by Balch (1974: 31), who concludes that the concept "sense of political efficacy" can be approached in one of two ways: "one ('external' or, perhaps, the separate concept of 'political trust') for the perceived responsiveness of authorities and institutions, and one ('internal') for the individual's evaluation of his own political abilities." My use of the concept of political efficacy should be viewed as corresponding to the "external efficacy" dimension. Hence, as conceptualized here, inefficacy is most synonymous with perception that government is nonresponsive, or with lack of political trust.

Figure 1 also shows that in addition to individual characteristics, contextual factors may have a bearing upon recognition of an advocacy contact channel. Here, one important contextual variable, size of the city in which one lives, is explored.

Data Sources and Operational Issues

The analysis is based on data gathered during the summer of 1977. The study included three SMSA's—St. Louis, Missouri; Rochester, New York; Tampa–St. Petersburg, Florida. Twenty-four study jurisdictions were selected from these SMSA's; in each jurisdiction, one or more neighborhoods were selected for study. A total of 60 neighborhoods were included. In each neighborhood, a telephone questionnaire was administered to a household random sample of approximately 200 residents. All valid interviews that do not involve missing data on the relevant variables form the basis for the analysis.[4]

City population size is that reported in Census Bureau estimates for 1975. All other variables are derived from the citizen survey. The respondents' race, income, and education level are based upon individual questionnaire items, with income reported in $5,000 categories. The dependent variable is based on responses to the following item:

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[3] Neal and Seeman (1964) and Seeman (1972) actually focus on "powerlessness," but define powerlessness in a way that is synonymous with political inefficacy. Note also Seeman's observation that the research linking group membership with high efficacy may be interpreted either as showing that powerlessness/inefficacy influences membership (negatively) or that membership influences powerlessness/inefficacy.

[4] The study neighborhood selection was made to insure as much variety as possible in socioeconomic characteristics and in size of the police department serving the neighborhood (size of jurisdiction). Neighborhoods were defined to match as closely as possible the boundaries of existing police beats and locally recognized neighborhoods. The respondents constitute random samples for each of the 60 neighborhoods, but the neighborhoods and jurisdictions are purposive, not random samples. While the respondents do not constitute random samples of either the metropolitan areas or the study jurisdictions, they may be considered representative of a broad array of neighborhood and jurisdictional types. While 12,017 valid interviews were completed, the total *N* shown in the tables is only 8,000–9,000 or so, because of missing data and don't know responses to one or more of the items involved. For further details on the data collection procedures, response rates, etc. see the Technical Reports published by the Workshop in Political Theory and Policy Analysis, Indiana University.

> Suppose that you wanted to change the way police services are delivered to your neighborhood. Is there any person or organization that you would contact about this? Who would that be?

Individuals responding "no" to the first part of the question are categorized here as having recognized no advocacy channel; all citizens who identified a neighborhood association, civic group, or other nongovernmental, voluntary association (or leader thereof) are categorized as recognizing a citizen organization as their advocacy contact; all other contacts are categorized as public official/other. The overwhelming majority of these latter contacts are government officials or agencies.

The measure of political efficacy is the following item: "You can't get any satisfaction from talking to public officials in this community." Responses of "agree" or "strongly agree" indicate low efficacy; responses of "disagree" or "strongly disagree" indicate high efficacy. Unfortunately, a series of alternative measures of efficacy is not available in this survey, so the ideal, multiple indicator approach cannot be pursued. Hence, the findings in this regard must be treated as tentative.[5]

Race, Efficacy, and Advocacy Channels

With respect to race, the following hypotheses are tested:

Hypothesis 1(a): Blacks are less likely than whites to have recognized an advocacy contact channel.

Hypothesis 1(b): However, the citizen organization is a more commonly recognized channel for blacks than for whites.

Hypothesis 1(c): The link between race and advocacy channel recognition is the result of the mediating effect of political efficacy.

Table 1 presents data bearing on these hypotheses. It shows that blacks are less likely to have identified an advocacy contact than are whites and that members of other racial groups are still less likely to

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[5] An item asking whether the respondent thought local officials were concerned about the neighborhood was not used as a measure of efficacy because of face validity problems, i.e., it might be interpreted by the respondent as a question of whether their neighborhood is one about which officials need to be concerned. While only a single indicator is used, it is substantially similar to those in the University of Michigan Survey Research Center political efficacy scale which bear upon "external efficacy." The item used here, for example, is comparable to SRC efficacy scale items such as, "I don't think public officials care much about what people like me think" and, "People like me don't have any say about what the government does" (Robinson et al., 1968: 460). Both of these, as well as the item used here, are designed to tap the respondents' expectancy that they can have an impact on politics, given their beliefs about the responsiveness of government.

Table 1. Contact Recognition, by Race, and by Race and Sense of Political Efficacy

	White	*Black*	*Other*
All*			
Have no contact	52%	63%	72%
Would contact citizen group	5	9	3
Would contact official/other	44	28	25
(*N*)	(6,748)	(2,597)	(148)
Low efficacy			
Have no contact	59%	68%	80%
Would contact citizen group	5	9	4
Would contact official/other	37	23	16
(*N*)	(1,541)	(801)	(50)
High efficacy			
Have no contact	45%	59%	65%
Would contact citizen group	5	10	2
Would contact official/other	50	31	33
(*N*)	(3,706)	(1,140)	(63)

* In this and all other tables, combined *N* of low and high efficacy rows is less than corresponding *N* in All row, because breakdowns for those responding "neutral" or "don't know" to the sense of political efficacy item are not presented in the tables.

have recognized some advocacy channel. Note, however, that the percentage differences between blacks and whites are not very large—Hypothesis 1(a) is supported, but not strongly. Note also that, while racial differences are somewhat more marked among high efficacy than among low efficacy respondents, Hypothesis 1(c) is *not* supported. Racial differences in the extent to which some advocacy channel is recognized remain when a control for efficacy is added.

Table 1 also provides some evidence in support of Hypothesis 1(b). While all respondents, irrespective of race, more frequently name an official or person other than a citizen group contact, the difference in proportions between these two alternatives is much greater for whites than for blacks. Furthermore, while blacks are much less likely than whites to say they would contact a public official, they are almost twice as likely as whites to say that they would turn to a citizen group.

These results are consistent with Verba and Nie's (1972: 160–61) and Eisinger's (1976: 123) speculations about the relative importance of group-based channels for assertion rather than individual advocacy among blacks, and with that literature which posits that blacks are more inclined toward voluntary association involvement than whites (Myrdal, 1944; Babchuk and Thompson, 1962; Orum, 1966).[6] The results are also consistent with observations that neighborhood organizations, spawned in inner-city neighborhoods by the citizen participation requirements of federal programs, have persisted and developed into institutionalized advocates vis à vis the city bureaucracy, especially for black residents (Kramer, 1969; Fainstein and Fainstein, 1974; Piven and Cloward, 1977: 271).[7]

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[6] As Smith and Freedman (1972) note, these studies involve a special version of the compensatory interpretation of black participation in voluntary associations, i.e., that blacks participate more in voluntary associations to compensate for exclusion from other political and economic institutions, or because blacks, and especially lower-class

Socioeconomic Status, Efficacy, and Advocacy Channels

With respect to income and education, the following hypotheses are tested:

Hypothesis 2(a): Lower income individuals are less likely than higher income individuals to have recognized an advocacy channel.

Hypothesis 3(a): Less educated individuals are less likely than more educated individuals to have recognized an advocacy channel.

Hypothesis 2(b): However, the citizen organization is a more commonly recognized channel for lower income than for higher income individuals.

Hypothesis 3(b): The citizen organization is a more commonly recognized channel for less educated than for more educated individuals.

Hypothesis 2(c): The link between income and advocacy channel recognition is the result of the mediating effect of sense of efficacy.

Hypothesis 3(c): The link between education and advocacy channel recognition is the result of the mediating effect of perceived efficacy.

Like the hypotheses in group 1, these hypotheses are based on the literature indicating that the "underclass" is less likely to engage in traditional forms of political assertion (Verba and Nie, 1972), and the somewhat more mixed evidence with respect to lower levels of indi-

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blacks, lack strong family ties, and need voluntary association involvement to compensate. Not all empirical research on the subject concludes that blacks are more likely than whites to participate in voluntary associations. See, for example, Wright and Hyman (1958), Hyman and Wright (1971), and Verba and Nie (1972: 151). London (1975) also finds that blacks are less likely than whites to join associations, but notes that the mixture of findings on this point may be attributed to the mixing of "sociable" organizations, or what Gordon and Babchuk (1966) call "expressive" groups, with involvement in "instrumental" groups, which better fit the conception here of the parapolitical citizen organization.

[7] Fainstein and Fainstein (1974: 44–45), for example, describe the Cooper Square Committee, which developed from its genesis as the "official neighborhood renewal organization" into an organization which "performed many of the functions of the traditional political machine—it assisted residents in dealing with the city bureaucracy in exchange for their support." Greater recognition of citizen organizations by blacks may also be a function of enhanced black solidarity resulting from recent emphasis on "black power" and similar themes (Olsen, 1970).

vidual contact with public officials among those with lower social status (Verba and Nie, 1972; Eisinger, 1972). Hypotheses 2(b) and 3(b) pursue the compensatory interpretation of the role of citizen organizations.

Tables 2 and 3 present data that substantially support Hypotheses 2(a) and 3(a); Hypotheses 2(c) and 3(c), however, are not supported by the data. Whether income or education is considered as a measure

Table 2. Contact Recognition, by Education, and by Education and Sense of Efficacy

	Level of Education (in years)			
	1–11	*12*	*13–15*	*16 or more*
All*				
Have no contact	70%	59%	45%	36%
Would contact citizen group	5	5	7	7
Would contact official/other	25	36	47	57
(*N*)	(2,688)	(3,108)	(1,932)	(1,832)
Low efficacy				
Have no contact	74%	65%	49%	47%
Would contact citizen group	5	4	9	7
Would contact official/other	20	31	41	45
(*N*)	(771)	(799)	(481)	(219)
High efficacy				
Have no contact	67%	55%	41%	29%
Would contact citizen group	4	5	7	7
Would contact official/other	29	40	52	64
(*N*)	(1,123)	(1,593)	(1,089)	(1,138)

* See note to Table 1.

Table 3. Contact Recognition, by Income, and by Income and Sense of Efficacy

	Annual Household Income					
	Under $5,000	*$5,001–10,000*	*$10,001–15,000*	*$15,001–20,000*	*$20,001–25,000*	*Over $25,000*
All*						
Have no contact	69%	61%	53%	46%	37%	35%
Would contact citizen group	5	6	6	6	6	6
Would contact official/other	26	33	40	48	57	59
(*N*)	(1,653)	(1,846)	(1,663)	(1,328)	(776)	(846)
Low efficacy						
Have no contact	72%	65%	57%	56%	41%	55%
Would contact citizen group	6	5	8	6	5	6
Would contact official/other	22	29	35	38	54	39
(*N*)	(464)	(518)	(404)	(321)	(165)	(169)
High efficacy						
Have no contact	62%	57%	50%	41%	34%	30%
Would contact citizen group	6	6	6	6	6	5
Would contact official/other	32	37	44	53	59	65
(*N*)	(668)	(890)	(885)	(779)	(512)	(561)

* See note to Table 1.

of socioeconomic status, recognition of some advocacy channel decreases dramatically with socioeconomic status. The link between socioeconomic status and advocacy channel recognition is not primarily the result of the mediating effect of political efficacy; substantial socioeconomic differences remain when a control for efficacy is added. Note, however, that efficacy is a specification variable. The relationship between socioeconomic status and contact recognition is much more marked among those with high efficacy than among those with low efficacy.

Tables 2 and 3 also show that these socioeconomic status differences in the extent to which any channel for advocacy is recognized are primarily differences in the extent to which individuals recognize a public official or other contact. Individuals of higher socioeconomic status are much more likely than those of lower status to name an advocacy channel in the official or other category; differences in recognition of a citizen group are negligible (when income is the independent variable) or slightly weighted toward greater recognition of citizen organizations among the better educated.

Citizen organizations do not, therefore, play a compensatory role for lower-status individuals generally. Their compensatory potential becomes evident only when we consider those individuals who *have* recognized some channel for advocacy. While all respondents, irrespective of socioeconomic status, more frequently name an official contact than a citizen group, the difference in proportions between these two alternatives is much greater for higher-status than for lower-status individuals. The ratio of public official to citizen organization contacts is about 5:1 for lower-status respondents, and about 7:1 or more for higher-status respondents. It is in this sense that a citizen organization is a relatively more important alternative for lower-status individuals.

With some exceptions (the highest income and the highest education categories), these socioeconomic differences are more pronounced among those low on efficacy than among those high on efficacy. Lower-status individials with a high sense of efficacy are less distinct from their higher-status counterparts than are lower-status individuals with a low sense of efficacy. The citizen organization, in other words, is relatively more salient for low than for high efficacy respondents, as well as being more salient for lower-status individuals than for higher-status individuals.

City Size, Efficacy, and Advocacy Channels

The hypotheses examined above identify classes of individuals who may be expected to be more cognizant of an advocacy channel, and those for whom the citizen organization is more likely to be a recognized option. However, situational characteristics may also have a bearing upon patterns of recognition of advocacy channels. Here we consider one important contextual variable—the size of the city in which the respondent lives.

Hypothesis 4(a): City population size is negatively associated with citizen recognition of an advocacy channel.

Hypothesis 4(b): However, the citizen organization is a more commonly recognized channel in large cities than in smaller cities.

Hypothesis 4(c): The link between city size and advocacy channel recognition is the result of the mediating effect of sense of efficacy.

Citizen recognition of some channel for advocacy is hypothesized to be less in large than in small cities because of the presumed dampening effect of their larger and more complex service systems. However, Hypothesis 4(b) posits that, while this complexity lowers the overall level of advocacy channel recognition in the large city, it may also bring citizen organizations into greater prominence. Citizens may be expected to look more frequently to citizen organizations as advocacy intermediaries when the context for direct contact with officials is more confusing or intimidating. Citizen organizations may be expected to be more salient advocacy channels in large cities for another reason as well. The literature on voluntary associations suggests that such groups "are concomitants of modernization, making their appearance in a society as it is transformed from a folk or traditional social order into an industrial, urban social system; . . . voluntary associations only become necessary as the ties of kinship, neighborhood, and religion break down" (Smith and Freedman, 1972: 15).

Obviously, residence in a small city does not make the individual a member of a folk society, but differences in city size may reflect differences in the degree of urban culture. The larger the city, the more the resident is immersed in the urbanized milieu which, according to the viewpoint above, is conducive to the proliferation of voluntary associations.

Finally, Hypothesis 4(c) posits that these phenomena (greater inability to define any advocacy channel and greater salience of citizen groups) result not so much from the complexity and confusion of the large city context and the proliferation of voluntary associations there, but rather from diminished political efficacy, engendered by the larger, more distant bureaucracy of the big city.

Table 4 presents data bearing on these hypotheses. As with previous hypothesis sets, we find substantial support for the (a) and (b) hypotheses, but less for (c). Residents of large cities are less likely than those of smaller cities to have recognized some advocacy chan-

Table 4. **Contact Recognition by Size of City, and by Size of City and Sense of Efficacy**

	Size of City		
	Large (N = 4) (Over 200,000 pop.)	*Medium (N = 7) (25,000–80,000)*	*Small (N = 10) (Under 20,000)*
All			
Have no contact	64%	48%	48%
Would contact citizen group	8	5	3
Would contact official/other	28	47	49
(*N*)	(3,806)	(2,295)	(2,026)
Low efficacy			
Have no contact	66%	60%	58%
Would contact citizen group	8	4	4
Would contact official/other	26	36	38
(*N*)	(1,116)	(502)	(431)
High efficacy			
Have no contact	60%	39%	41%
Would contact citizen group	9	5	3
Would contact official/other	31	55	57
(*N*)	(1,728)	(1,282)	(1,140)

NOTE: Respondents from neighborhoods in any of the urban counties studied (i.e., not living in an incorporated jurisdiction) are not included.

nel; but these differences appear both among those low in efficacy and among those high in efficacy. Sense of efficacy does act as a specification variable, however. Differences in advocacy channel recognition by city size are much more substantial among those high in efficacy than among those low in efficacy. For those low in efficacy, even the medium-sized city context shows as great a dampening effect on recognition of advocacy channels as does the large city context for the highly efficacious. In sum, a sense of inefficacy, when coupled with residence in a larger city, is particularly conducive to failure to recognize any advocacy channel.

Note also that Hypothesis 4(b) is strongly supported. Even in these distributions based upon all respondents—distributions greatly affected by the substantial numbers of large-city respondents who have recognized no advocacy channel—we find that large-city residents are more likely than residents of smaller cities to name a citizen organization as their advocacy channel. This relationship holds irrespective of sense of efficacy.

The greater salience of citizen organizations in large cities is even clearer if we compare citizen organizations named and other advocacy channels named. The ratio of public official and other contacts to citizen organizations is 15:1 in small cities and 10:1 in medium-sized cities, compared to only 3.5:1 in large cities. These differences remain when a control for efficacy is added; the only substantial difference between the low efficacy and the high efficacy respondents' named contacts is in the small-city category. The data suggest that residence in a small city, when coupled with a high sense of efficacy, is particularly conducive to recognition of a direct contact with a public official as one's mode of advocacy. This finding bears directly upon that "public choice" literature which argues that decentralization in metropolitan organization, and multiple, smaller jurisdictions generally, permit the citizen's preferences to be more directly communicated (Bish and Ostrom, 1973: 24; Rich, 1978). Table 4 shows that small-city residents *are* more likely than large-city residents to identify some direct contact with a public official as a suitable channel for advocacy; but the data also show that recognition of this advocacy channel by small-city residents is much more characteristic of those with a high sense of efficacy than of those with low efficacy.

Finally, Table 4 suggests a particular interpretation of the greater salience of citizen organizations in large cities. Since recognition of citizen organizations in large cities is about the same irrespective of sense of efficacy (at least as measured here), there is little support for the notion that the relative importance of citizen organizations in large cities is the result of a more prevalent sense of inefficacy in the big-city context. To the extent that this interpretation is not supported, it becomes more important to consider the "proliferation" interpretation—i.e., the view that the large city is more congenial to the development of a dense and varied network of voluntary associations, and that these provide greater opportunities for advocacy intermediary roles to develop and become recognized by citizens.

Summary and Conclusions

The analysis shows that the poor, the less educated, minorities, and residents of large cities are all less likely to recognize a channel for advocating police service change.[8] These individuals may therefore be in a comparatively poor position to exercise the "voice option" (Hirschman, 1970). While the findings with respect to the role of political efficacy should be considered more tentative, it appears that the links between lower income, less education, minority status, and large-city residence, on the one hand, and failure to recognize some advocacy channel, on the other, are *not* due to a more prevalent sense of inefficacy among these types of residents. The efficacy variable does, however, serve to specify the conditions under which racial, socioeconomic, and city size differences are more and less marked.

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[8] Interrelationships among these independent variables have also been considered, although this analysis is not presented in the text. For example, because blacks are more heavily represented in large cities, we may be interested in whether the relationship between race and advocacy channel recognition may be accounted for by the city size variable, or vice versa. Analysis of the data shows that each of these variables has an independent effect. In each city size category, blacks are more likely than whites to have no advocacy contact, and are more likely than whites to identify a citizen organization; similarly, for both blacks and whites, city size is negatively related to recognition of some advocacy channel, but positively associated with recognition of a citizen organization.

The analysis provides some support for a compensatory interpretation of the role of citizen organizations, but only if we carefully circumscribe the meaning of the compensatory role. When we consider the full set of respondents, the tradeoff is largely between having no contact and recognizing a public official as one's contact. It is in these categories that socioeconomic, racial, and city size differences are most evident. The existence of the citizen organization option does not alter this basic pattern. Rather, the special importance of citizen organizations for the "underclass" is evident in the distribution of recognized contacts. "Underclass" residents *who specify an advocacy contact* are much more likely than their "advantaged" counterparts to name a citizen organization. Citizen organizations are not therefore more important for underclass residents as a whole; rather, the citizen organization option is more salient against the backdrop of the smaller number of underclass citizens who recognize any advocacy channel at all. Citizen organizations play a compensatory role in the sense that, were this option to be removed, the impact would be comparatively greater for those poor, or less well-educated, or blacks who have managed to define some channel for political assertion.

The "compensatory" interpretation is less relevant with respect to understanding the greater importance of citizen organizations in large cities. While there is evidence that citizen organizations are more commonly perceived as advocacy intermediaries in large than in small cities, this phenomenon does not appear to result from a more pervasive sense of inefficacy engendered by the big-city context. The greater salience of citizen organizations as advocacy channels in large cities may instead be the result of proliferation of such groups in large cities, and therefore an enhanced opportunity for group-based assertion.

Recent attention to citizen-initiated contact as a form of political assertion contributes to our understanding of political participation and the politics of urban service delivery. Interpretation of this form of participation requires attention to differences in citizen beliefs about how they might effect such contact. Further research is needed to determine whether the patterns found here hold with respect to urban service issues other than policing. Further research is also needed to determine whether the character of citizen organizations available to the citizen, or the accessibility, power, or responsiveness of local officials, have any bearing on the extent to which citizens identify one or the other as their advocacy channel.

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Nonresponse in Mail Surveys: Access Failure or Respondent Resistance

CAROL P. SOSDIAN AND LAURE M. SHARP

CONCERN has been voiced increasingly in the past few years that respondent unwillingness to participate in surveys has become a serious threat to the validity of information collected through survey methods (American Statistical Association, 1974). Survey researchers have assumed that burdensome survey instruments, respondent skepticism about the usefulness of research, and the issues of informed consent, invasion of privacy, and confidentiality have been major factors in the assumed increase in respondent resistance (Bailar and Lanphier, 1978; Sinaiko and Broedling, 1976). To date, there is little evidence to support these beliefs (Marquis, 1977). The limited but systematic data collected thus far do not support the contention that informed consent and confidentiality issues play a major role in increasing nonresponse (Singer, 1978; Goldfield et al., 1978). But despite the lack of empirical evidence, strongly held beliefs about respondent resistance guide the research strategies of survey organizations and survey sponsors.[1]

If respondent resistance is indeed as widespread and serious a phenomenon as has been suggested, mail surveys—as well as surveys

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[1] In particular, the federal government's Office of Management and Budget (OMB), which has the responsibility for clearing questionnaires and interview instruments used by federal agencies and their contractors, views reduction of respondent burden as one of its chief missions in the clearance process.

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based on personal interviews—should be affected. But here, too, the relationship between respondent resistance and response rates has apparently not been studied (Kanuk and Berenson, 1975). Heberlein and Baumgartner (1978) have suggested that variations in mail response rates can be largely attributed to the number of contacts and the salience of the survey topic to the respondent.[2] But, in addition, we have long suspected that the biggest problem in mail surveys is inability to establish clearcut categories of reached and unreached respondents. The researcher knows only the number of questionnaires sent out and the number returned, either by the designated respondent, or by the postal service as never delivered. On this basis, nonresponse is calculated. But in fact, the researcher does not know the number of questionnaires that reached the eyes of the intended respondent, and gave him the opportunity to decide whether or not to respond. For example, mail may be incorrectly delivered, misplaced, or thrown away before the respondent has an opportunity to make his response decision. Thus, without an accurate estimate of access to intended respondents of a survey, it is difficult to estimate the amount of intentional nonresponse experienced.

The problem of mail survey access to respondents became of special interest during a recent Bureau of Social Science Research study that looked into some aspects of the usefulness of external degree programs (EDP's) for adults. Between May and July, 1977, BSSR conducted a mail survey of a select group of college degree recipients, men and women who had received an associate or baccalaureate degree from a sample of institutions offering external degree programs. A total of 3,499 persons were included in the original survey sample.[3]

Because of a relatively low response rate and evidence of poor handling of questionnaires by the postal service, we decided to address the resistance vs. access issue more comprehensively in an intensive telephone survey of nonrespondents designed primarily to investigate the problem of nonresponse bias.

The final response rate for the mail survey was 56 percent, and the final completion rate was 42 percent (Table 1). In designing our

[2] Accurate determination of the amount and direction of change in response rates has been further complicated by past inconsistency within the profession with respect to the calculation and reporting of "response rates." Recently, it has become standard to report "response rate" as the proportion of *eligible* potential respondents from whom a completed data set is obtained. "Completion rate" is now generally considered the proportion of *all* potential respondents from whom a completed data set is obtained. For discussion of these definitions and their role in standardizing the reporting of survey research results, see Kviz (1977), and Bailar and Lanphier (1978).

[3] The findings are reported in three monographs by Sosdian and Sharp (1978).

Table 1. Survey of External Degree Recipients: Response Status After Three Mailings

	(N)	*Percent*
Respondents (completed questionnaire returned)	(1,486)	42
Ineligibles (deceased, no degree received, etc.)	(22)	1
Undelivereds (all questionnaires returned by post office)	(830)	24
Nonrespondents (never heard from)	(1,161)	33
Total Sample	(3,499)	100

Response rate: 1,486/2,647 = 56% (Respondents/Eligibles)
Completion rate: 1,486/3,499 = 42% (Respondents/Total Sample)

sample for the telephone survey, we attempted to clarify three issues: (1) the reliability of the postal delivery service, (2) a more accurate assignment of nonparticipants to "nonrespondent" and "undelivered" categories, and (3) reasons why nonrespondents had not responded to the mail survey.

Because of time and resource constraints, we sampled about one-third of the 2,000 cases eligible and available for the follow-up ($N=631$); of these, 252 were "nonrespondents" and 279 were "undelivereds."

Telephone Tracking and Evidence of Misclassified Cases

The first procedure in the follow-up was to find telephone numbers for each of the 631 cases (Table 2).[4] Although we used several

Table 2. Survey of Nonrespondents: NRQ Sample Telephone Listings and Availability of Listing Information by Type of Case

	Type of Case (Classified Prior to NRQ Survey)					
	Nonrespondent		*"Undelivereds"*		*Total*	
Availability of Telephone Listings	*(N)*	*%*	*(N)*	*%*	*(N)*	*%*
Open listing	(194)		(83)		(277)	
Closed listing	(27)		(10)		(37)	
Subtotal of listings	(221)[a]	63	(93)[b]	34	(314)	50
No listing	(131)	37	(186)	66	(317)	50
Total NRQ sample	(352)	100	(279)	100	(631)	100

[a] Of the 221, 146 (66%) were listed at the same address as in our records.
[b] Of the 93, 22 (24%) were listed at the same address as in our records.

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[4] We assumed that, given the age, education, and income of this population of graduates, the number of persons without telephones would be negligible.

sources, telephone company operators provided us with information which was most helpful in examining the final mail survey classification of our nonrespondent questionnaire (NRQ) cases. It turned out that 37 percent of the nonrespondents did not have a local telephone listing. Of course, it does not necessarily follow that they no longer lived at the designated address or in the community, but it is reasonable to assume that at least some of them did not receive our questionnaire. Conversely, telephone listings were in fact found for 33 percent of the "undelivereds" in the NRQ sample—most often at another address in the same community. These data suggested that there had been slippage in delivery, and failure to return undelivered materials despite the use of first-class postage.

At the end of the telephone tracking, we had obtained a listing for 277 of the 631 in the NRQ sample (44 percent).[5]

The NRQ Interviews and Reasons for Nonresponse

The 277 telephone listings yielded contacts with 187 correctly identified graduates. Of these, the large majority (80 percent) agreed to be interviewed ($N = 150$).[6]

The first question we asked these 150 persons sought to establish respondent access, i.e., receipt of our questionnaire. Of those in the "nonrespondent" group who agreed to be interviewed ($N = 122$), over one-quarter (28 percent) claimed that they had never received the questionnaire. Thus, our analysis was limited to only 83 self-described nonrespondents, i.e., persons who stated that they had received the questionnaire, but according to our records, had failed to return it. When our interviewers asked each of these questionnaire recipients to give the most important reason why he or she had not returned the form, 10 persons (12 percent of the group) claimed that the questionnaire had been completed and mailed. As for the others, lack of motivation, rather than overt resistance, characterized the responses (Table 3). Nearly three out of five indicated lack of time or interest; a few thought they had received the questionnaire "by mistake." Only one interviewee touched upon the issue of burden, in the remark that the (16-page) instrument had seemed too long. No interviewee mentioned concerns about confidentiality, invasion of privacy, or the "usefulness" of research.

[5] In order to maximize chances of locating and interviewing an NRQ respondent, we accepted many listings for individuals with the same name as our respondent, but at a different address.

[6] Nearly equal proportions of "real nonrespondents" and "undelivereds" agreed to be interviewed.

Table 3. Reasons Given for Nonresponse

Question 1: "Can you tell me the most important reason you decided not to fill it (the questionnaire) out?" [a]

Coded Response	*(N)*	*Percent*
Questionnaire was completed and mailed	(10)	12
Never got around to it	(17)	20
Too busy	(14)	17
Forgot it or lost it	(11)	13
Questionnaire was completed but not mailed	(8)	10
Questionnaire came at a "bad time" in respondent's personal schedule	(6)	7
Thought questionnaire received "by mistake": thought it did not apply to him/her	(5)	6
Questionnaire seemed "too long"	(1)	1
Other reasons	(7)	8
Did not answer	(4)	5
Total	(83)	99[b]

[a] Asked of 83 interviewees who reported having received the instrument.

[b] Does not total to 100 percent due to rounding.

Discussion

Returning to our original query concerning the relative impacts of respondent access vs. respondent resistance upon our mail survey experience, we find that the data from the NRQ follow-up suggested that access rather than resistance may well have been a major factor. But obviously, our findings are suggestive, rather than conclusive. Clearly, there is some slippage in post-office handling; we had evidence of this even prior to the telephone survey of nonrespondents. We will never know if those respondents who did not have a telephone listing but whose questionnaires were not returned by the post office did actually receive a questionnaire, but we suspect that some proportion did not. Similarly, it is likely that some nonrespondents simply claimed that they never received the questionnaire to save face in the telephone interview situation, but it is unlikely that every one of them lied. What is clearly needed is some systematic research to document access to respondents with mail questionnaires. Given the high volume of "junk" mail (some of it sent first class), it is not unlikely that many persons discard certain types of mail without ever opening it, or that family members prescreen mail, discarding low interest items before the addressee ever sees them. There may be other interventions—at the post office, in apartment houses, and in private homes—which impede delivery of mail to designated respondents and which should be systematically studied.

Insofar as our telephone survey yielded information about attitudes of "nonrespondents"—that portion of the sample which had the opportunity to respond, but chose not to do so—there was no indication from the overt responses that respondent felt hostile or cautious about being survey participants. Rather, like many interviewed in past follow-up surveys, they had assigned low priority to participating. If hostility and suspicion were as widespread as held by some survey researchers and sponsors, we would have expected more of our NRQ interviewees to volunteer complaints about burden or invasion of privacy, despite acquiescence and politeness pressures in the telephone interview situation. Possibly, the truly hostile group were the refusers, who constituted 20 percent of the reached nonrespondents. This proportion is slightly higher than in an earlier BSSR survey of college graduates which included a survey of nonrespondents (Sharp).[7] But for this group, too, we lack sufficient data to make a definite assessment.

We suspect that in recent years, survey professionals have been too eager to accept and internalize the notion of growing resistance to surveys on the basis of less than systematic evidence. Clearly, more careful research is needed to examine actual nonresponse—i.e., refusals—vs. the technical issue of respondent access. It may well be that attention to this problem would be more useful than emphasis on reducing respondent burden in maintaining high standards of reliability in survey research.

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[7] In the 1960 survey, 10 percent of nonrespondents refused to be interviewed. On both occasions, reasons for refusals were not probed.

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The Ambiguities of "Religious Preference" in Survey Research—A Methodological Note

WADE CLARK ROOF

A QUESTION about religious preference is commonly asked in opinion polls and sample surveys. Typically the question is phrased: "What is your religious preference? Is it Protestant, Catholic, Jewish, some other religion, or no religion?" Often this is the only item on religion included, combined with a follow-up on specific denominational preferences. Typically the question is used as a means of ascertaining a respondent's religion. That is, a person's religious *preference* is taken as the basis for determining a person's religious *affiliation*—and by implication sometimes, one's religious background, current religious practice, and faith.

That some ambiguity and error are introduced in measuring religious affiliation this way has not gone unnoticed. McCourt and Taylor (1976) found in a special study, where those of Catholic preference were reinterviewed, 45 respondents (5 percent of the sample) claimed they were *actually not* Catholic. From this they concluded that the inconsistency was not due to coding or interviewer error, but represented a discrepancy of some importance in religious measurement. Suggested were some plausible explanations for the variation in response. For example, respondents in a "questionable" marital status vis-à-vis church teachings or those with spouses of a different faith, might be led to state preferences not in keeping with actual membership. Religious preference and religious belonging are simply not always the same, especially in a pluralist society in which denominational switching is fairly common and meaning and belonging are only loosely integrated.

Exactly how much discrepancy there is between religious *preference* and religious *membership* is unknown. Well over 90 percent of

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Americans indicate a religious preference in polls and surveys. Actual membership in churches is assumed to be less, although just how much less and/or how belonging varies in relation to preferences are matters about which there is speculation but little empirical knowledge.

Fortunately the recent Gallup survey of "Unchurched Americans" included questions on both religious preference and church membership, thus making it possible to examine the preference-belonging issue in greater depth than previously possible. The "Unchurched" survey was conducted by the Gallup Organization, Inc. in conjunction with a coalition of church bodies in April 1978. It consisted of a national probability sampling of the adult civilian population in the continental United States, 18 years of age and older, with 1,523 interviews.

A cross-tabulation of preferences and memberships is shown in Table 1. Sixty-six percent of those indicating a Protestant preference are Protestant church members; 69.5 percent of the Catholics are members.[1] The extent of Protestant-Catholic inconsistency is small, less than 1 percent for Protestant-preference respondents and slightly more than 2 percent for Catholic-preference respondents. Four percent of the Protestants "don't know" if they are members, compared to about 7 percent of Catholics.

Lack of overlap between preference and membership is more evident when Protestants are grouped by denominations. Data for the major Protestant bodies are shown in Table 2. Almost three-fourths (73 percent) of the Protestants of these major faiths are church members, of one denomination or another. But the discrepancy between

Table 1. Religious Preferences and Memberships

Preferences	*N*	*%*
Protestant (887)		
Members		
Protestant	585	66.0
Catholic	7	0.7
Don't know	32	3.6
Nonmembers	263	29.7
Catholic (449)		
Members		
Catholic	312	69.5
Protestant	11	2.4
Don't know	30	6.7
Nonmembers	96	21.4

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[1] Not unexpectedly, the proportion of church members expressing a preference for the same religion is much larger: 95 percent of those claiming membership in the Catholic Church express a preference for Catholicism, and 98 percent of those claiming membership in a Protestant Church report a preference for Protestantism.

Table 2. Preferences and Memberships for Major Protestant Bodies

			% Members	
Preferences	*N*	*% Nonmembers*	*Same Denomination*	*Other Denomination*
United Methodist	103	19.4	68.9	11.7
Southern Baptist	100	21.0	68.0	11.0
Lutheran	97	35.1	51.5	13.4
Presbyterian	74	33.8	56.8	9.4
United Church of Christ	46	23.9	52.1	24.0
Episcopalians	41	31.7	51.2	17.1
American Baptist	37	30.6	54.1	15.3

preference and denominational affiliation is quite considerable. Among those expressing a liberal Protestant preference, i.e., the Congregationalists and Episcopalians, 24 and 17 percent, respectively, report membership in other religious groups. Both of these liberal denominations enjoy high status among Protestants, which perhaps accounts for their greater preference on the part of some who actually belong to other denominations. In the case of conservative religious preferences the discrepancy is smaller, but not less than 10 percent on the average. Even in these larger, mainline constituencies, no less than one out of 10 belongs to a church different from that indicated as a preference.

Given the extent of these differences, the question arises: Who are the persons for whom there is a discrepancy between religious preference and church membership? Several hypotheses come to mind concerning marital status and spouse's religiosity. One hypothesis is that married respondents are likely to be less discrepant in preference and belonging than the nonmarried (i.e., single, separated, divorced, widowed), and another is that married respondents with spouses of the same faith are less discrepant than those with spouses of another faith. Both hypotheses were supported. Sixty-five percent of nonmarried Protestants belong to a congregation of the faith, compared to 73 percent of those married; for Catholics the respective figures are 75 percent and 80 percent. Differences were greater in the case of religiously mixed marriages. Seventy-four percent of Protestants and 73 percent of Catholics having spouses of the same faith are members of congregations consistent with their preferences, compared to 40 percent of Protestants and 57 percent of Catholics in religiously mixed marriages.

Aside from marital status and spouse's religiosity, other factors thought to be important for predicting the preference-versus-membership discrepancy were gender, age, years of education, local community reference, "new morality" values, and extent of childhood religious socialization. An index of localism was constructed using three items: length of residence in the local community, number of closest friends within the local community, and involvement in voluntary organizations in the local community (alpha = .52). A "new morality" index was created with four items: acceptance of sexual freedom, acceptance of marijuana usage, approval of legal abortions, and approval of extramarital sexual relations (alpha = .63). Childhood religious socialization was measured by how often the respondent attended church or Sunday school when in grade school.

The effects of these correlates were examined by means of regression analysis. Regressing discrepancy between preference and membership as the dependent variable on the correlates, we obtain the results shown in Table 3.

The strongest predictors of discrepancy for both Protestants and Catholics are religiously mixed marriages, local community reference, and new morality values. Notably less important are such structural factors as gender, marital status, age, and education. Hence persons most likely to indicate a religious preference yet *not* to belong to a congregation of the same faith are those who, regardless of gender, age, or education, are married with spouses of another faith, or who adhere to nonconventional values, or who participate very little in local community activities. The discrepancy is most apparent for individuals whose values, beliefs, and outlook put them at odds with their spouses or with others in the mainstream culture.

Though statistically significant for both groups, religious exogamy

Table 3. Correlates of Preference-Membership Discrepancy

	Standardized Regression Coefficients	
	Protestants	*Catholics*
Marital status (married = 0; single, separated, divorced, widowed = 1)	.05	.03
Religiously mixed marriage (spouses of same faith = 0, mixed faith = 1)	.17*	.12*
Gender (male = 1, female = 0)	.09	.03
Age	−.05	−.03
Years of education	−.09	−.02
Childhood religious socialization	−.08	−.14*
Local community reference	−.11*	−.18*
New morality values	.10	.18*

* Statistically significant at .01 level.

appears to be less important for Catholics than for Protestants.[2] For Catholics, new morality values and local community reference are stronger as correlates of the preference vs. membership discrepancy than mixed marriage. Childhood religious socialization works against the discrepancy, more so for Catholics than for Protestants.

Overall, it appears that discrepancies between preference and membership are most likely for persons experiencing cross-pressures of one kind or another, as in the case of religiously mixed marriages, and for persons with nonconventional outlook and values, not highly integrated into local community institutions and activities. For both, the religious discrepancy is probably a manifestation of a broader normative discrepancy, and not simply an isolated or strictly religious phenomenon. Future researchers would be well advised to recognize that ambiguities of this kind exist and to proceed with caution in drawing extended inferences from one about the other.

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[2] The coefficients shown in the text are based on aggregate Protestant and Catholic groupings. For example, a Methodist married to a Baptist is treated as a "same faith" Protestant marriage, in order to make Protestant and Catholic comparisons meaningful. Even so, the exogamy factor is stronger for Protestants. Using Protestant denominational categories as basis for calculating mixed marriages, the coefficient would be still higher.